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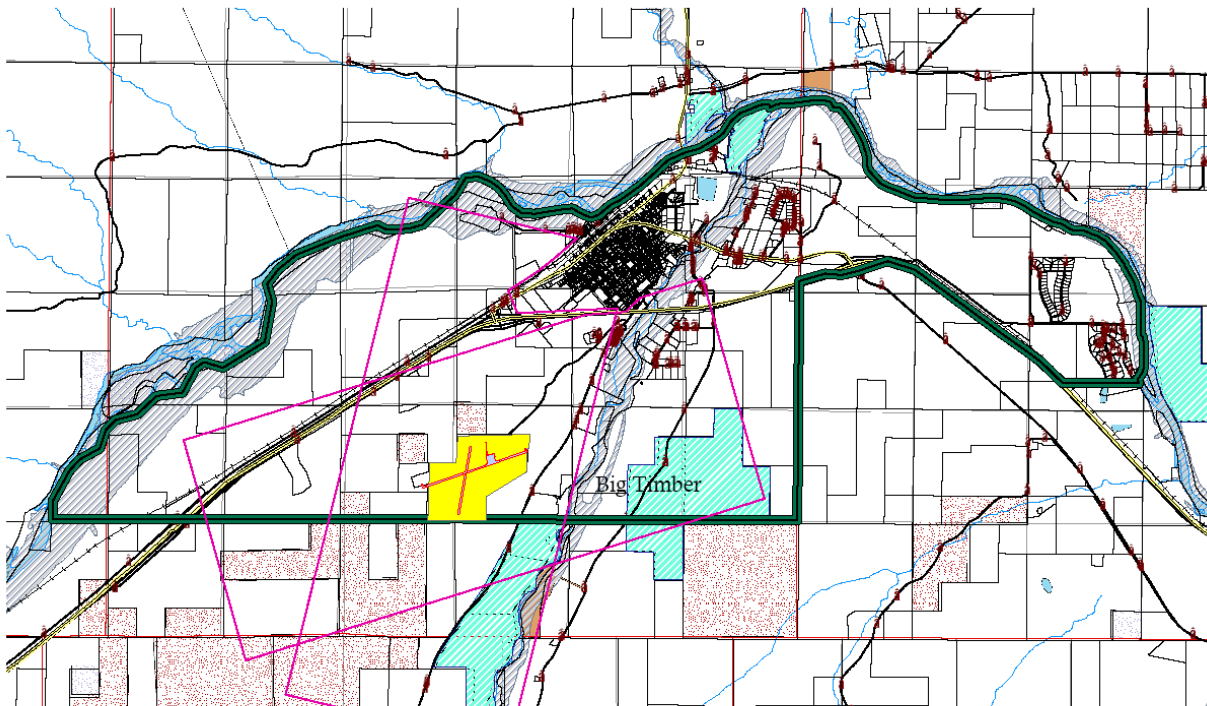
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1 CONTENT OF THIS GROWTH POLICY

This growth policy has been prepared by the City-County Planning Board and is intended to cover the portion of the City-County Planning Board's jurisdiction that lies within the City of Big Timber. A public hearing to collect comments on the Big Timber Growth Policy was held on March 24, 2009. Following the public hearing a final draft of the growth policy was submitted to the Big Timber City Council for review. Upon completion of the Council's review and incorporation of their revisions, the growth policy was finalized and adopted by the City Council on June 1, 2009.

There are two Planning Boards in Sweet Grass County, a City-County Planning Board and a County Planning Board. The jurisdictional area of the City-County Planning Board is shown in Map 1-1. This area includes the City of Big Timber and areas surrounding it. All areas in the County beyond the City-County Planning Board jurisdiction are in the County Planning Board jurisdiction. Regardless of whether the an area falls within the County Planning Board jurisdiction or the City -County Planning Board jurisdictional area all areas outside the City of Big Timber are covered by the currently adopted Sweet Grass County Growth Policy. This Growth Policy is intended to cover just the City of Big Timber. The growth policy elements found in the most recent edition of the Sweet Grass County Growth Policy considers all areas beyond the City limits of Big Timber.



Map 1-1 City-County Planning Board Jurisdiction

In some sections of the descriptions of existing conditions for Big Timber, County wide data is included either for comparative purposes or because only County wide data is available for the particular feature being described.

2 HISTORY OF BIG TIMBER

The town of Big Timber was officially platted as a townsite in 1889 and on December 10, 1902 Big Timber became an incorporated city. The railroad was a driving force behind the development of the Big Timber community. Big Timber's main business street, McLeod Street, was laid out in the town's original plat so that the street was perpendicular to the railroad.

Although the town was founded several years before it became officially platted, it was not the first major town in Sweet Grass County. Dornix was located down the hill from Big Timber, in an area now known as Rivers Across and was founded in 1882. Dornix grew in size and boasted a lively social scene. During the heydays of Dornix, the town had a general store, several saloons, a hotel, and several residences. In the summer of 1882, Abe Keiger built a ferry east of what is currently the Yellowstone Bridge. However, when the railroad came through, they decided that it was difficult to stop in Dornix because of its location at the bottom of a hill and it was hard to start the train back up when it had to start uphill. The railroads built a depot in what is now Big Timber and started making regular stops there. In 1883, the town of Dornix relocated to Big Timber and within months of the move, nothing remained of Dornix.

When Big Timber was platted as a townsite in 1889, it was already a thriving business and agricultural center. The Grand Hotel, which is still being used as a restaurant and hotel today, was built in 1890 and was the only McLeod Street building to survive the 1908 fires that destroyed most of downtown Big Timber. The fire started when a passing railroad car sent sparks flying into the grass. The winds pushed the fire down the street with most of the buildings completely or partially destroyed.

Some of the shops and businesses that were serving the community during Big Timber's early years are as follows.

Hotels:

The Grand Hotel, built in 1890, is located on McLeod Street and is the only hotel remaining from the 1800's era. The Cottage Hotel was built in 1899 while the Roy Hotel and Bramble Hotel were both built in 1885. The Yule Hotel was constructed in 1886 and the Mjeldes Arlington in 1894. The Independence Hotel was built in 1893.

Saloons:

The Gem Saloon was constructed in 1892 and the Livingston Bottle Works Company built a saloon in 1898. The Brooks Saloon was built in 1877 and the Wool Exchange Saloon was constructed in 1883. Schallock Saloon Sorbey was built in 1888 and the Blakeslee Restaurant and Saloon (now the Townsite Apartments) was in business in 1898.

Meat Lockers:

Dan Hogan Meat Market started serving the community in 1885 while WR Bramble Meats served Big Timber in the early 1880s. Blackburn and Hogan Meats was founded in 1886 and Bryan Meat in 1888. ED Clarke Meat Locker was constructed in 1890.

Mercantile:

The Kellogg Mercantile store was a familiar store in Big Timber in the 1880s. The Kellogg store went under some name changes starting out as the Kellogg Mercantile in 1880 and then becoming Budd, Kellogg, and Vidiery in 1888. The store became Kellogg and Wallbridge in 1892 and that remained the name until it was burned down in the 1908 fire. Other stores and businesses that were in Big Timber were Banner Cigars-Irvine in 1895 and Henry Nicholson Furn and Organs in 1897. Shanks and Lee Bank in 1889 and National Bank in 1891 helped the people with their banking needs. J.W. Geiger Fire Insurance started in 1898 and helped insure people's property in case of a fire. Beasley and Lee Livestock Company was founded in 1892 and the Woolhouse was first constructed in 1884 before burning down in the 1908 fires. The Woolhouse was rebuilt in a different location than the original building so that it would be protected from winds coming from the west, which was helped push the fire of 1908.

Churches:

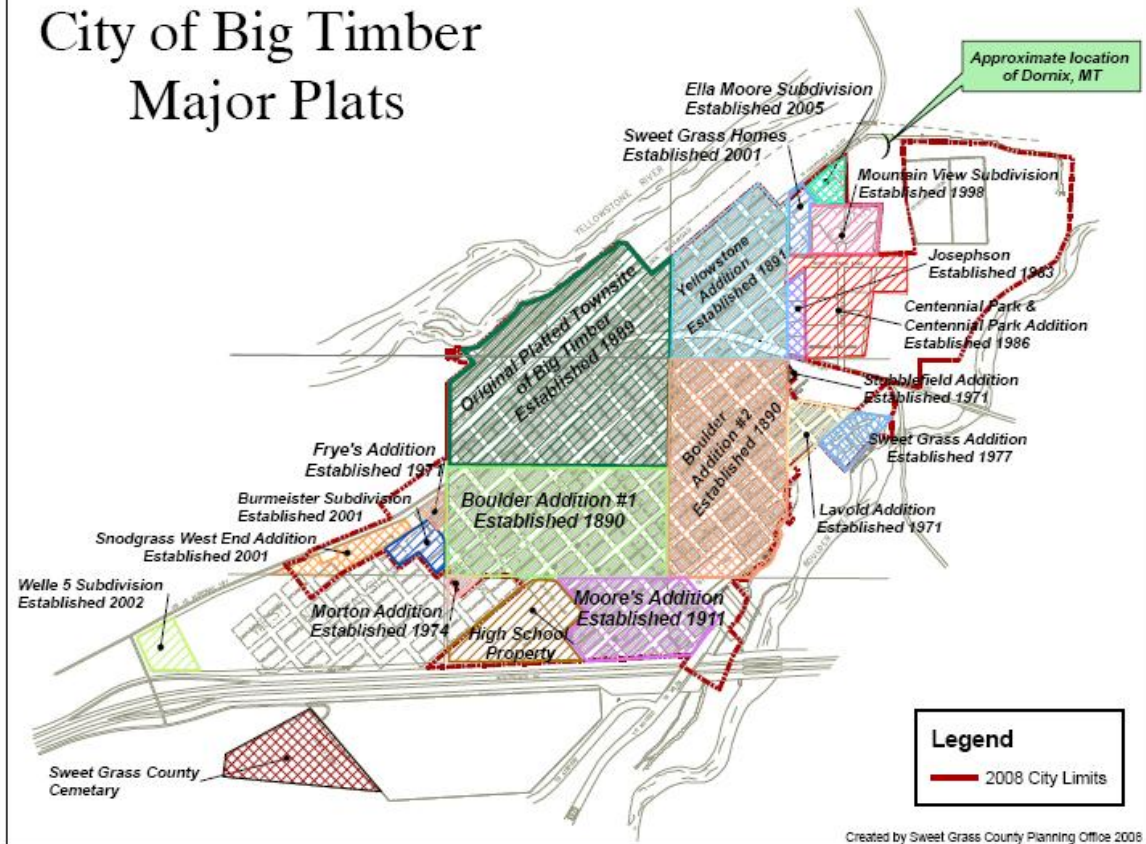
Several of the churches in and around Big Timber hold significant historical value. The Episcopal Church, built in 1887, is listed on the National Register for Historic Places. The United Church of Christ's Congregational Church was built in 1896 and has undergone several renovations. The Lutheran Church was not completed until 1907 but work on the church was started several years prior to the completion.

Chinatown:

Big Timber had a thriving Chinatown district in the City block bounded by Anderson, First, McLeod, and Front Streets. Chinese families and workers came to Big Timber after working on the railroad around 1883. Some of the Chinese restaurants located in Big Timber around this time included the Home, Half Moon Café, the Golden Eagle, and unnamed restaurant which was located in the center of Chinatown and was one of the most popular places to eat in early Big Timber.

Map 2.1 below shows the stages of platting that laid out Big Timber. Most of the land in Big Timber was platted from 1889 to 1911. The lots that were created in these early plats were 30' wide x 140' long, all of the streets with the exception of 2nd, 3rd and 4th Avenues were platted at 80 ft wide. The 4th Avenue width was 100 ft and 2nd and 3rd were 70 ft wide. Since the lot widths were narrow, most property owners bought two or three lots to build on. The 1970's brought the next significant additions to the City with the additions of the Lavold, Fries, Morton and Sweet Grass Additions. In 1986 Centennial Park, an industrial park, was platted. Townhouse developments were added in 1998 and 1999 with the plats of the Mountain View and Meadowlark Landing subdivisions.

City of Big Timber Major Plats



Map 2-1 City of Big Timber Major Plats

3 BIG TIMBER'S EXISTING CONDITIONS AND PROJECTED TRENDS

3.1 LAND USE

3.1.1 *GENERAL DESCRIPTION*

Approximately 590 acres are encompassed by the current Big Timber City limits. Big Timber has a relatively compact development pattern, confined to an area between the Yellowstone River to the north, Interstate 90 to the south, the Boulder River to the east and the railroad right of way to the west. With the exception of a few lots, essentially all of the area within the City limits is developed.

In recent years, a majority of the new home growth for the Big Timber area has been taking place beyond the City limits as rural suburban development. There are three major subdivisions named Twin Ponds, Mallard Springs and Yellowstone Meadows east of Big Timber and east of the Boulder River. There are also several minor subdivisions in the nearby areas. A filled mobile home park with 23 units is located just south of Big Timber on the south side of Interstate 90.

Growth of commercial areas in Big Timber has been limited by a relatively stable population and economy over the years. The Big Timber central business district has remained as the principal business area. Commercial uses are concentrated in the central business district and along state Highway 10 that loops through town.

Industrial uses are located along the Montana Rail Link railroad right-of-way and in an industrial park on the east side of the City named Centennial Park. The industrial uses have good access to rail and truck service, and are readily accessible to Interstate 90. The Centennial Park industrial area has a total of 7 lots. One lot remains available for future development.

3.1.2 *BIG TIMBER ZONING DISTRICT*

The City of Big Timber administers the Big Timber Zoning District which covers all land within the City limits and a portion of the land which is directly adjacent to the City limits. Results of an inventory performed in February of 2008 is shown in Figure 3-1 which lists the area quantity for each district classification included in the Big Timber Zoning District. A map showing the current boundaries of each district classification can be found at the City-County Planning Office.

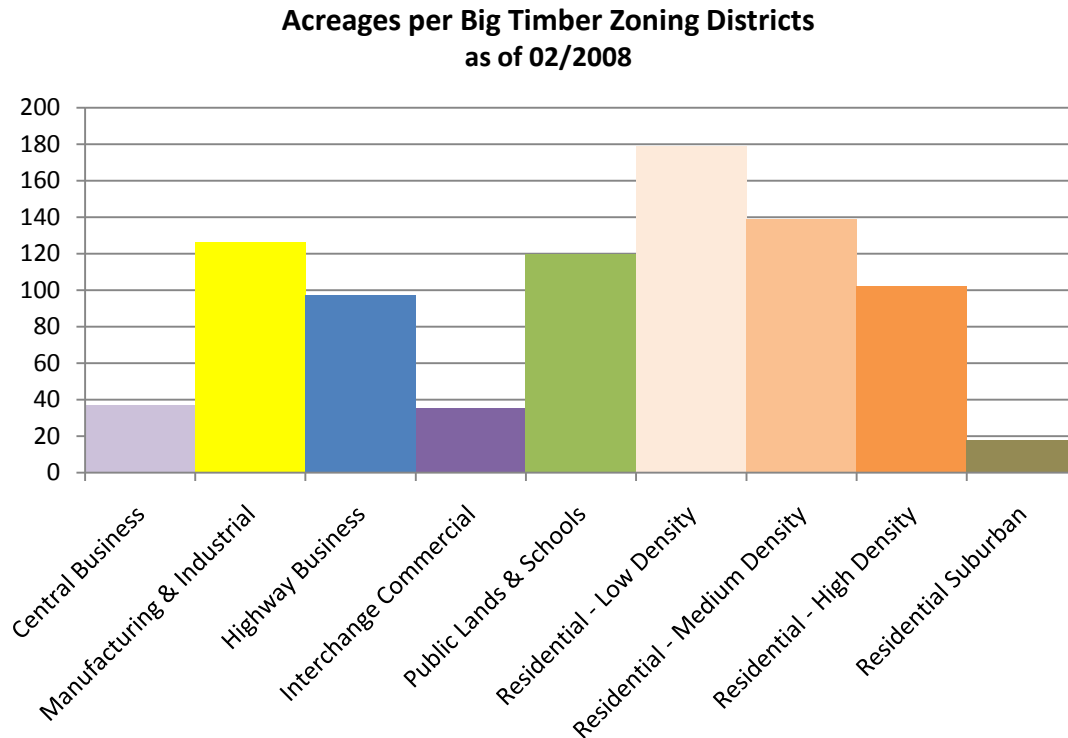


Figure 3-1 Chart of Areas Included in the Big Timber Zoning Districts

3.1.3 LAND CAPABILITIES AND NATURAL HAZARDS

The City of Big Timber sits on relatively flat land. Much of the soils in the City are rocky and can be moderately problematic for underground utility work and foundation excavations, however, the soils are generally rated well for bearing capacity required for building foundations and do not limit development.

Natural hazards for the Big Timber area include flooding due to spring runoff, large storm events or ice jams; wild fires; and extreme cold events. Big Timber is subject to high, sometimes damaging, wind speeds throughout the year, but especially through the winter months.

The main factors limiting the growth of Big Timber are topographic features surrounding the City. The two main development problems include the delineated flood plains on the Yellowstone and Boulder Rivers and the steep slope areas leading up to Airport Flats, southwest of Big Timber, which are susceptible to slumping.

3.1.4 LAND USE TRENDS

Big Timber will need to annex new lands in order for residential, commercial and industrial growth to occur since there is very little undeveloped land remaining within the City limits. The next most likely area for expansion of Big Timber is located adjacent to the west boundary of the City. There are approximately 62 acres of undeveloped land between the current Big Timber City limits and the Interstate 90 right of way that is covered by an adopted master plan. This area includes Residential, Highway Business and Interstate Interchange Commercial zones

that may be platted by future developers. On the east end of Big Timber there is a 7 acre parcel of undeveloped land remaining which includes Highway Business and Residential zoning. This parcel borders the Highway 10 right of way. A master plan has not been adopted for this parcel.

As Big Timber and the immediate surrounding areas experience population growth, additional park area will be necessary. Big Timber's Community Outdoor Recreation Association (CORA) has secured land on the east side of Big Timber for the purpose of park area. Actual progress in developing this park area will depend on CORA's fund raising efforts. The City also is currently developing a new park area named Dornix Park located along the Boulder River just east of the sewer lagoons.

Land use within the current boundaries of the City is not expected to undergo significant change. Land use changes to specific areas in the City could occur over time, however, that may affect traffic patterns or level of activity to the specific area involved. Examples of such changes would be in the grade school and high school areas if school expansions become necessary. Expansions of the schools at their current locations may cause use changes in the immediate school area such as residential lots being changed to public use. Another potential change within the current boundaries of the City might be the development of a currently vacant building such as the old high school building located on 4th Avenue or the construction of a new major facility such as an indoor pool.

3.2 DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

3.2.1 POPULATION HISTORY AND TRENDS

Figure 3-2 shows the population history for Sweet Grass County and Big Timber from 1910 to 2007. Sweet Grass County is a rural County. Based on the 2000 Census data, the County averages 1.9 persons per square mile compared to the state average of 6.2 persons per square mile. Big Timber is the only incorporated City in Sweet Grass County. The population within the Big Timber City limits has been between 45 to 55% of the total County population since the 1940's.

From 1990 to 2000 Sweet Grass County saw a 14.4% increase (1.44% average annual growth) in population and Big Timber grew by 6.0% (0.6% average annual growth). The increased growth rate from 1990 to 2000 was mainly attributed to the startup of an underground mine owned by Stillwater Mining Company. From 2000 to 2007 population growth slowed to a 0.7% average annual growth for the County and a 1.3% average annual growth for Big Timber. As of 2007 Sweet Grass County is the 39th most populous County out of the 56 counties in the state, with an estimated 3,807 residents. Big Timber is the state's 41st largest City out of 129 cities in the state, with a population estimated at 1,801 in 2007. Population growth within the County is due to immigration of people into the County. Deaths and births within the County are fairly equalized and have not contributed to population changes in the County.

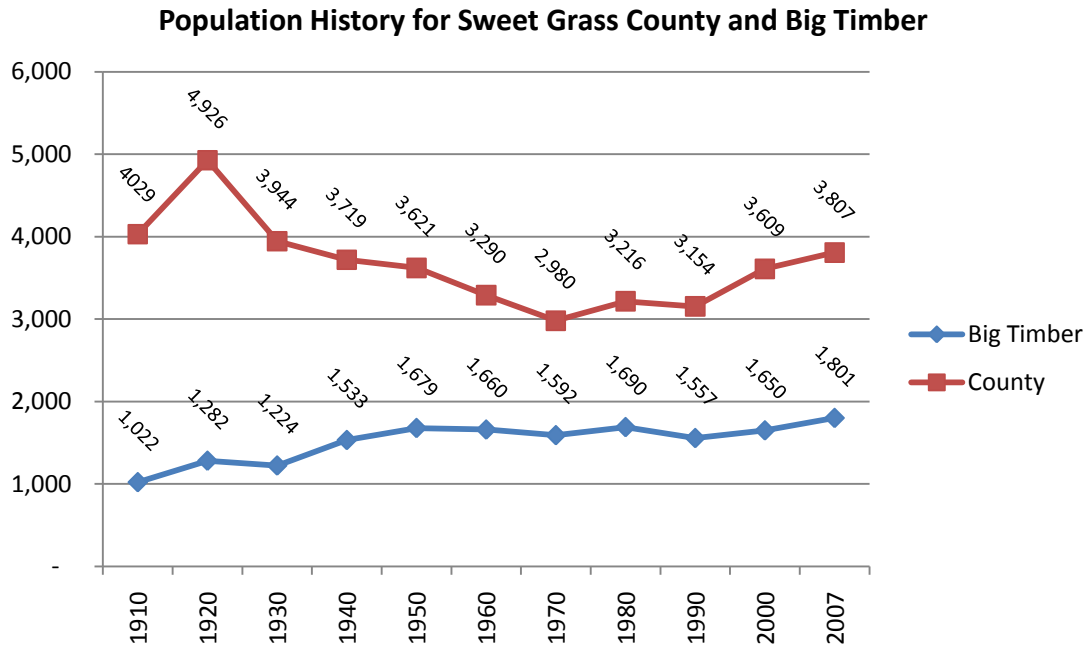


Figure 3-2 Graph of Population History

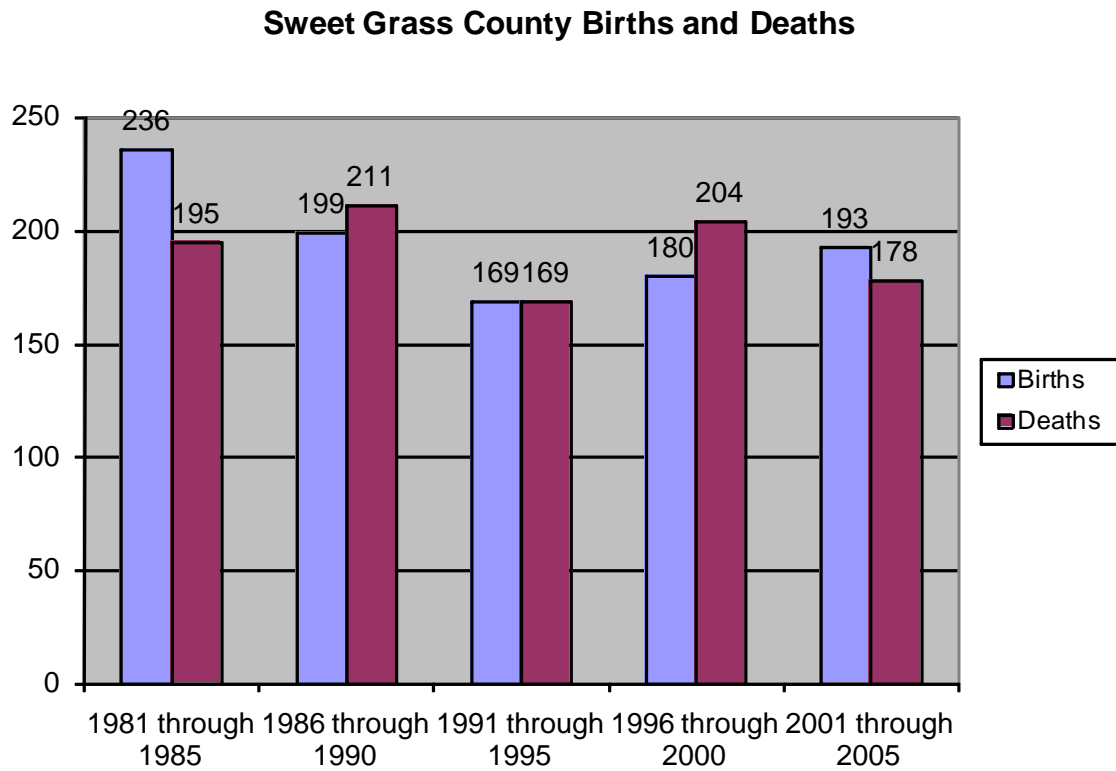


Figure 3-3 Sweet Grass County Births and Deaths

3.2.2 POPULATION AGE DISTRIBUTIONS

	1990		2000	
	County	Big Timber	County	Big Timber
Total Population	3,154	1557	3,609	1650
Number of Households	1,281	671	1,476	711
Males	1,542	722	1,800	810
Females	1,612	835	1,809	840
Age				
Under 5 years	208	100	211	96
6 to 19 years	701	335	784	235
20 to 54 years	1266	546	1,584	786
55 to 64 years	312	141	395	157
Over 65 years	667	435	635	376
Median age	39.2	41.5	41.1	42.4
Household Type				
Family household	872	397	987	430
Non-family household	409	270	489	281

Table 3-1

The median age of Sweet Grass County and Big Timber has been gradually rising over time. In 2007 the median age of the County was reported at 44.6. The median age reported in 2007 for Montana was 39.2 and the median age reported for the United States was 36.6. Montana's median age for 2007 ranks as the seventh highest age in the nation.

The age distribution of Big Timber closely correlates with the age distribution for the total County; however the population within Big Timber is somewhat older than the remaining County population residing outside of Big Timber.

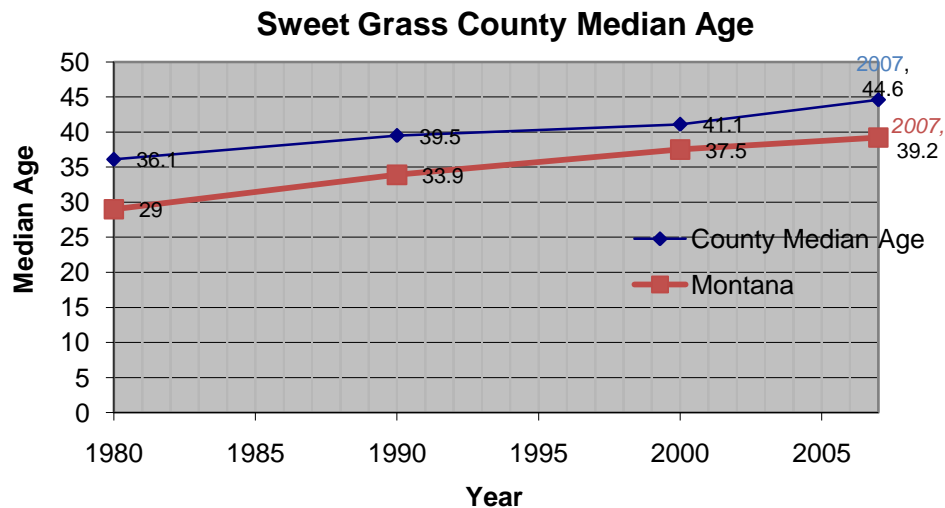


Figure 3-2 Median Age Graph

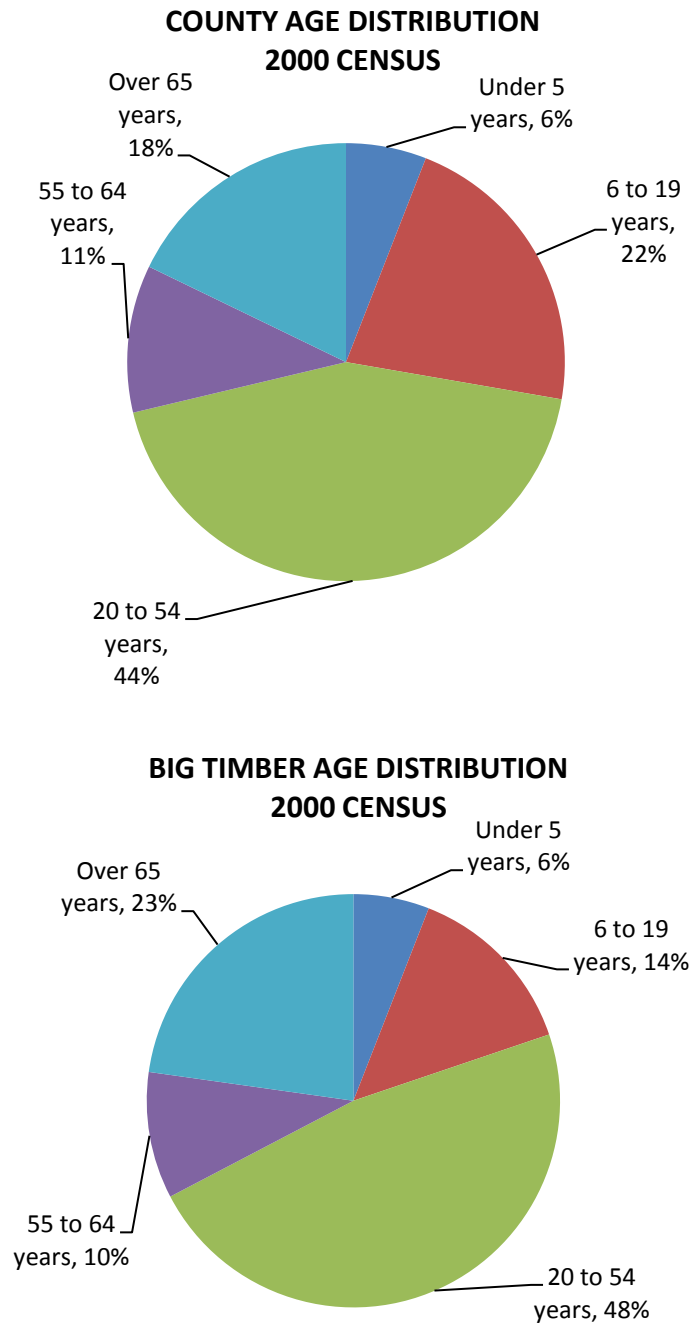


Figure 3-3 Charts of County and Big Timber Age Distributions

3.2.3 PROJECTED POPULATION TRENDS

In December of 2008 a major employer and economic entity in the County, Stillwater Mining Company (SMC), reduced its workforce due a downturn in metal prices caused by an overall economic downturn in the US economy. If this downturn remains or worsens and SMC ceases operations entirely, the population of Big Timber will most likely see reductions that could bring population totals back to the level seen in 2000. Conversely, if US economic conditions

improve and stabilize in the near future, the total population of the City of Big Timber is projected to continue to grow slowly and steadily in proportion to the County's growth (approximately 1% per year increase). However, if new residential lots do not become available in Big Timber through the subdivision and annexation of adjacent lands, most population growth experienced by the County will be outside the City of Big Timber in rural subdivisions.

The rate of growth and age distribution of that growth would be considerably different if a new economic entity came into the Big Timber area needing a large number of employees.

3.3 ECONOMIC PROFILE

3.3.1 *EMPLOYMENT*

The chart below shows the County's 2005 distribution of jobs in each economic sector.

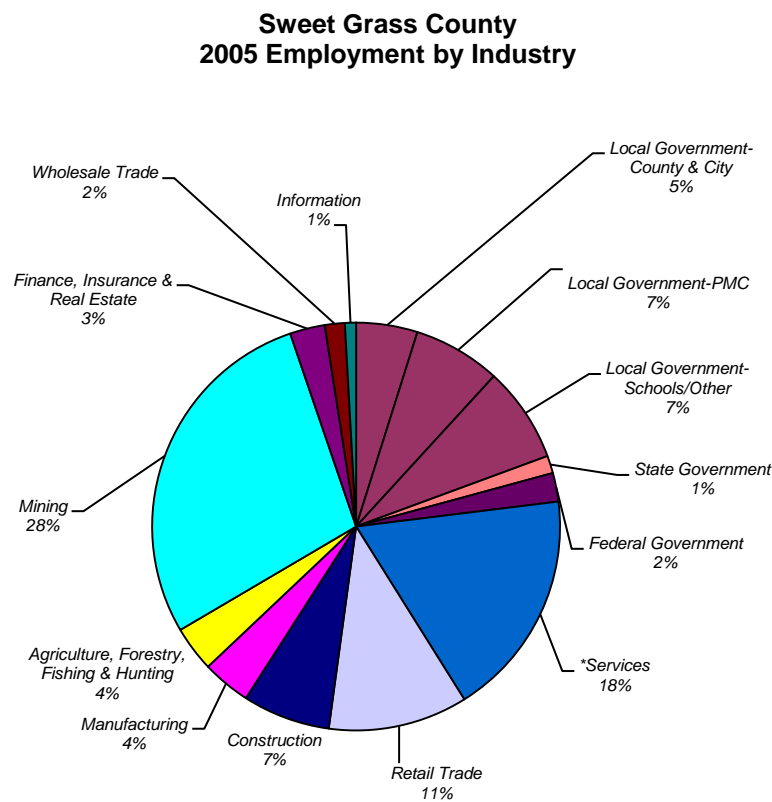


Figure 3-4 Sweet Grass County 2005 Employment by Industry

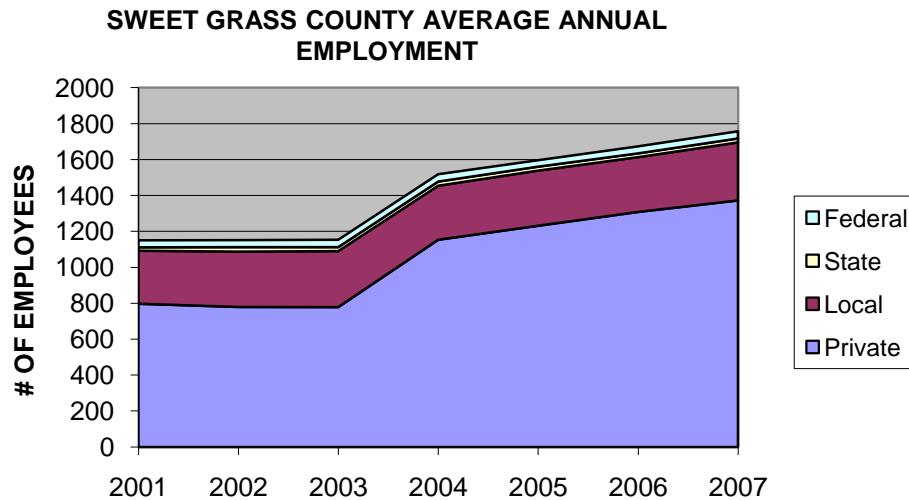


Figure 3-5 Sweet Grass County Average Annual Employment

Mining is one of Sweet Grass County's largest industries. Stillwater Mining Company (SMC), which is listed as one of the top 20 private employers in the state in 2007, is the largest private employer in Sweet Grass County. SMC operates an underground platinum and palladium mine in the East Boulder area south of Big Timber. In 2008 Stillwater Mining Company's employment at its East Boulder mine site was up to approximately 550 employees. About a third of those employees resided in the County. Subsequently, due to the 2008 economic downturn in the US economy which reduced platinum and palladium prices, SMC implemented job cuts in December of 2008. During the first quarter of 2009 SMC is operating with approximately 260 employees at the East Boulder site.

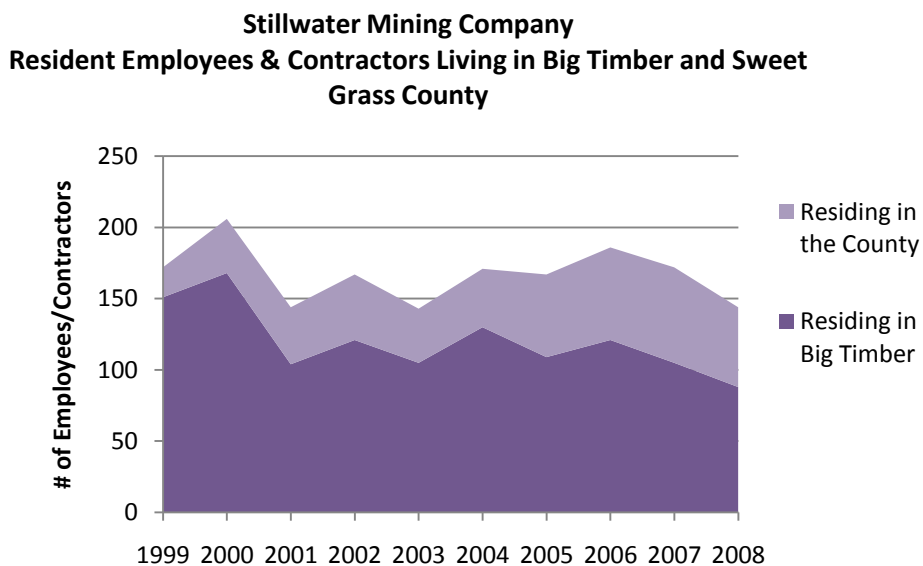


Figure 3-6 SMC Residents Employees & Contractors in Big Timber and Sweet Grass County

Agriculture is prevalent throughout the eastern and northern sections of the County, where primarily cattle and sheep are raised. In 2007 the County ranked as Montana's 10th top producer of sheep and lambs, and 31st in cattle. Some crops are also raised, particularly those which require little moisture, such as hay, wheat, barley, and oats. In 2007 there were 355 reported farms in the County. Farming is the primary occupation for 220 operators of the reported 355 farms.

Sweet Grass County comprises 1,846 square miles of land, of which, 449 are public lands. Natural amenities such as the Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness; the Absaroka, Beartooth, and Crazy Mountain Ranges; the Yellowstone and Boulder Rivers, and seven creeks provide ample fishing, hiking, and other outdoor recreation opportunities. Sweet Grass County is becoming a major draw for tourism and Big Timber is the hub of the County's tourism economy. Other significant economic subsectors included Retail Trade, Accommodation & Food Service, Finance and Insurance, Public Administration, Arts and Construction.

Sweet Grass County has a history of relatively low unemployment rates. Due to the benefit of having a large employer such as SMC, the County's 2007 unemployment rate of 1.6% was the lowest in the state. In 2008, with SMC reductions as well as reductions in other economic sectors, the unemployment rate rose to 2.4% and has averaged 4.6% for the first quarter of 2009.

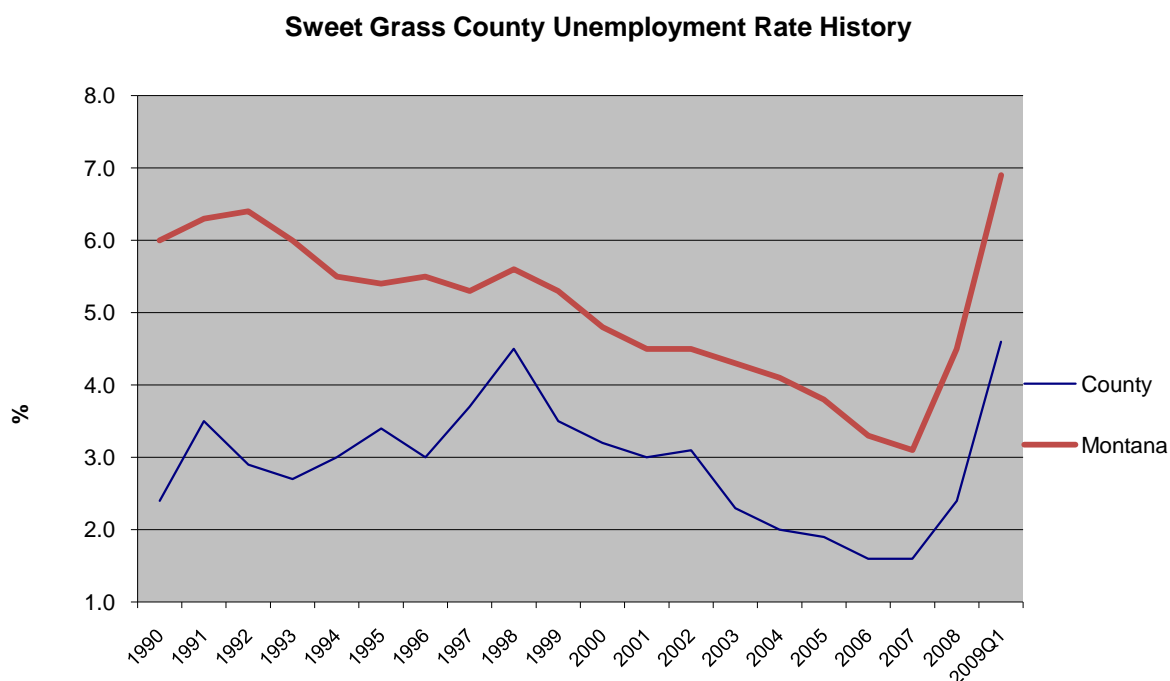
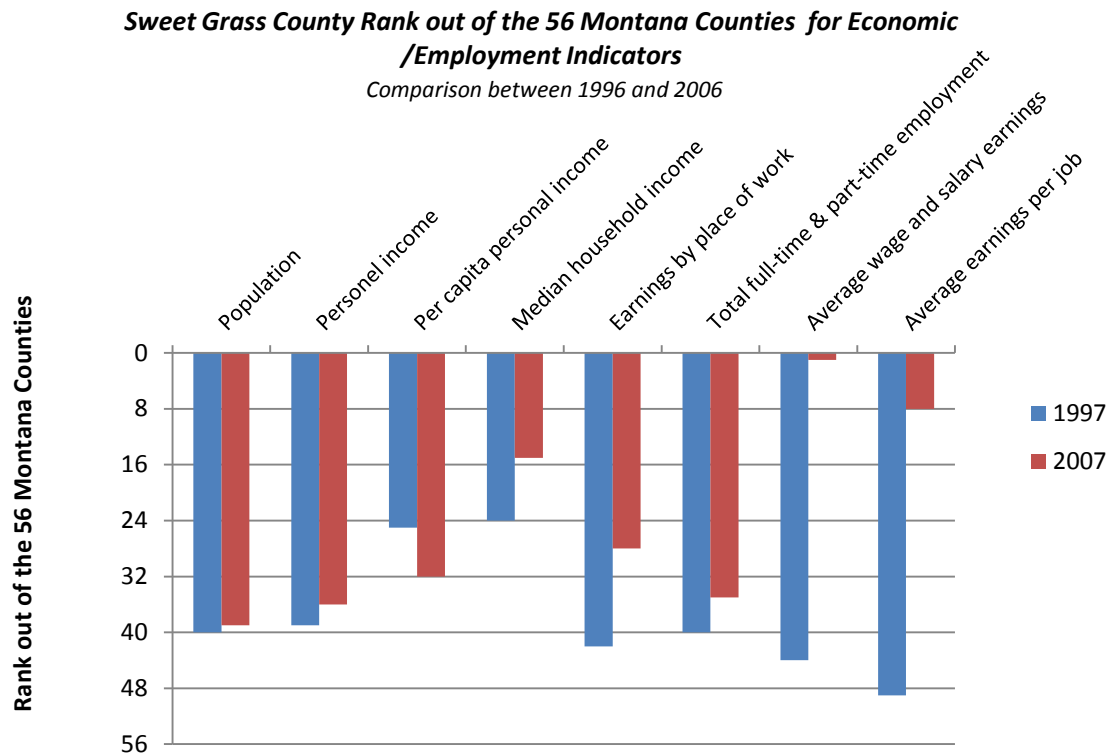


Figure 3-7 Graph of Annual County Unemployment Rates from 1990 to 1st Qtr 2009

3.3.2 ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

Figure 3-8 provides a comparison of the County's 2007 economic statistics to the statistics for the County 10 years prior in 1997.



	Rank in MT		Data (\$'s are x1,000)	
	1997	2007	1997	2007
Population	40	39	3,299	3,807
Personal income	39	36	\$60,985	\$107,930
Per capita personal income	25	32	\$18,486	\$28,448
Median household income	24	15	\$29,456	\$42,229
Earnings by place of work	42	28	\$29,236	\$79,989
Total full-time & part-time employment	40	35	2,044	3,005
Average wage and salary earnings	44	1	\$16,718	\$41,231
Average earnings per job	49	8	\$14,303	\$36,555

Figure 3-8 Chart of County's Ranking for Economic Indicators in 1997 and 2007

Sweet Grass County's population ranked 40th of the 56 counties in the state in 1997. In 2007 the County ranked 39th in population. In 1997 the County's earnings from employment ranked lower in the state than the ranking of earnings being reported for 2007. This information along with the lower unemployment rate in 2007, as shown in Figure 3-7, indicates improved economic conditions for the County in 2007 than in 1997.

Poverty rates for Sweet Grass County have historically run lower than state and US averages. The 2007 rate compared to the state and US rates is shown below.

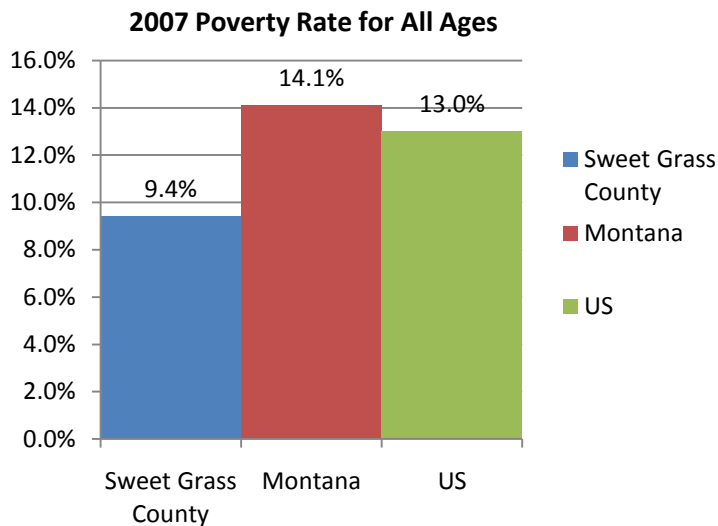


Figure 3-9 Poverty Rates for 2007

Another indicator of good economic health in Big Timber is increasing overall taxable values. The chart below provides the history of taxable values for the City of Big Timber and the County from 1974 to 2008. An increasing trend is shown from 2001 to 2008 which is mainly due to the valuation of gross proceeds from Stillwater Mining Company. The company officially began production in Sweet Grass County in 2001 and steadily increased production rates until 2008 when production was reduced due to an economic downturn.

For the fiscal year 2007-2008 Sweet Grass County's taxable value ranked 26th highest in the state while ranking 39th in the state for population. The City of Big Timber's taxable value ranked 25th out of the 129 incorporated cities and towns in the state while ranking 41st of the states incorporated cities and towns for population.

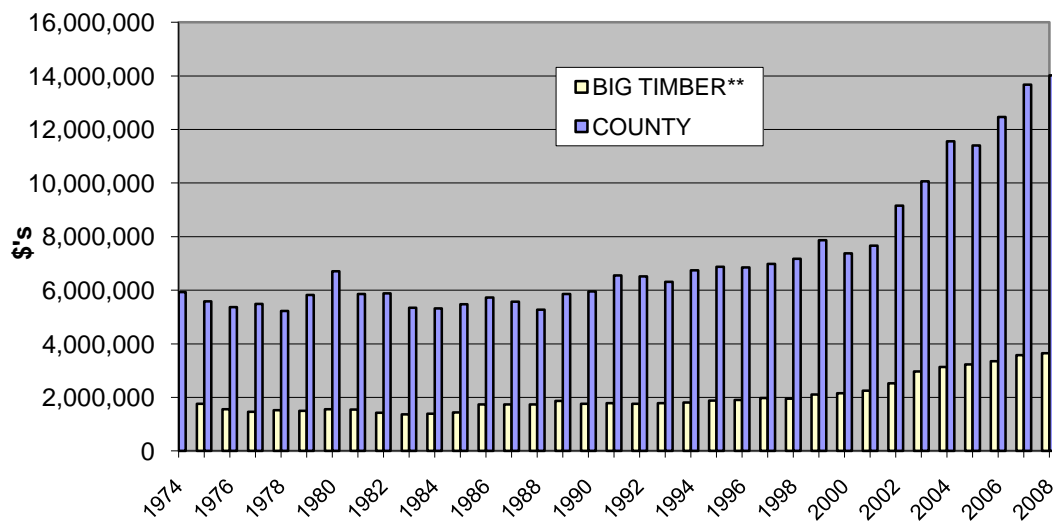


Figure 3-10 Chart of County and Big Timber Taxable Values

3.3.3 PROJECTED ECONOMIC TRENDS

Big Timber is currently experiencing good economic health and stability. It is important to keep in mind that this stability could be upset with changes in the nation's or global economy that may hinder areas such as construction, tourism, mining or other industries. A closure of the mine would result in significant reductions in tax revenues for the City and County as well as reductions to employment in the area. It is important that City and County officials keep in mind how to be best prepared for a significant downturn and plan for future economic development and diversity that will help support the area if a sector of the local economy is set back.

3.4 HOUSING

3.4.1 CURRENT CONDITIONS AND INVENTORY

The Bureau of Census data show that Big Timber had 808 total housing units in 2000. Of those 711 were occupied with 512 as owner-occupied and 199 as renter occupied. The composition of the total housing units in Big Timber and the County in 1990 and 2000 are shown in the below chart.

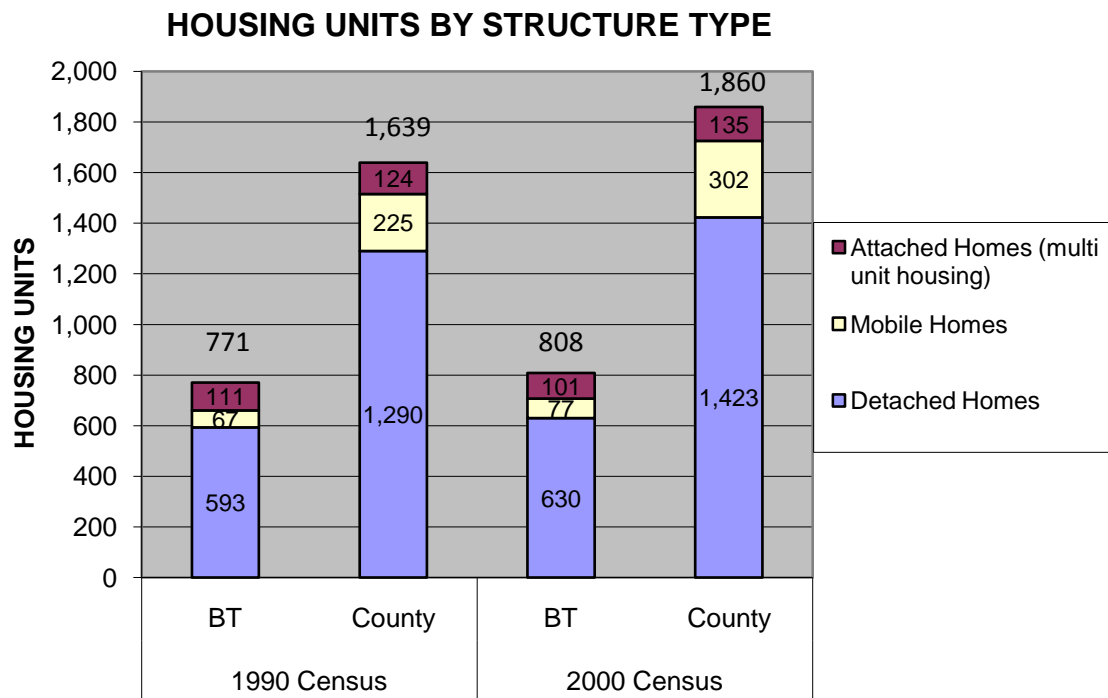


Figure 3-11 Chart of Census Housing Units in the County and Big Timber

The average number of persons per household in Big Timber was reported as 2.24 in the 2000 Census.

Big Timber has a lower percentage of newer homes than the state overall. The 2000 census reported that 31% of the state's housing was built between 1980 and 2000 compared to 14% in Big Timber. In Big Timber 58% of the housing was built in 1960 or earlier compared to 47% for the state.

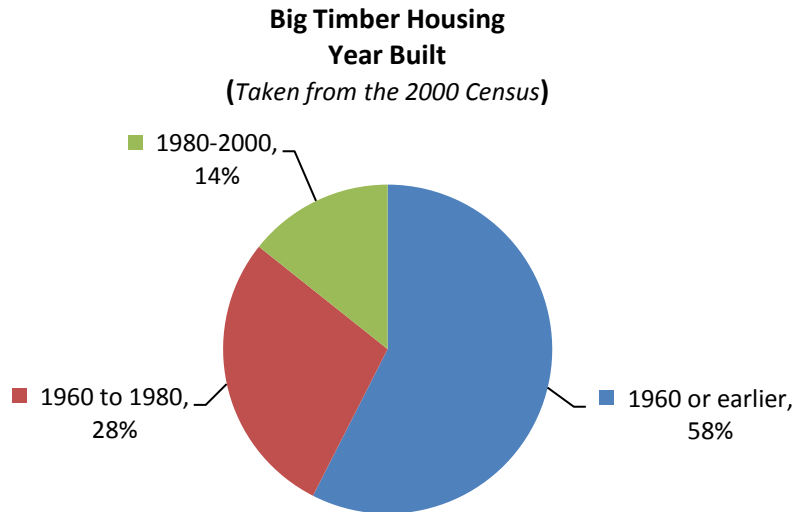


Figure 3-12 Big Timber Housing, year Built

The home ownership rate in Sweet Grass County for the year 2000 was at 74.1% compared to the statewide average of 69.1% for 2000. The average price of housing reported for Sweet Grass County by the Montana Department of Commerce was \$110,000 for 2003. The average for the price of housing for the state in 2003 was \$166,253.

3.4.2 PROJECTED TRENDS FOR HOUSING

The City of Big Timber does not have a surplus of platted lots for residential construction at this time and most new home construction is taking place outside the City limits. Big Timber is in need of all classifications of residential lots.

The lack of affordable housing has hindered the ability of schools, local government and some businesses to attract new hires. It is difficult for any type of new construction to meet affordable cost levels. Creating additional affordable housing units may require cooperation and assistance between local, state and possibly federal offices.

3.5 LOCAL SERVICES

3.5.1 LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The City of Big Timber is governed by an elected City Council with four council members and a mayor. Currently the City has eight full-time employees and 1 part-time employee. In the summer month, a Pool Manager and seven to eight pool lifeguards are hired. The City offices are located at City Hall, 103 East 3rd Avenue. An organizational chart showing the City's departments and services and County offices, which jointly provide City and County services, is given in Figure 3-16.

Law enforcement and planning services for the City are provided through joint service agreements with Sweet Grass County. These services are administered by the County with the City of Big Timber providing partial funding from City revenues for these County wide services. The City's library and the Big Timber Volunteer Fire Department are also funded

jointly by the City and County, however, the City administers the operations and funding for these services. The County's Office of Justice Court also serves as Big Timber's City Court.

The majority of the County offices are housed in the County Courthouse located at 200 West 1st Avenue in Big Timber. The Courthouse houses offices for the County Commissioners, Treasurer, Clerk and Recorder, Appraiser, and Planning. The Sheriff's Department, Justice Court/City Court, District Court, and a courtroom are also located in the Courthouse. The County Attorney Office, Office of Public Assistance and Family Services, Mental Health, County Extension, County Health Nurse and Weed Supervisor, as well as the County School Superintendent have offices in the Courthouse Annex Building located at 101 West 5th Avenue in Big Timber.

Funding for City budgets come from numerous revenue sources. Figures 3-13 and 3-14 show the breakdown of tax revenue sources and expenditures of City operations for the 2007/2008 fiscal year. These figures do not include revenue and expenditures for water, sewer and solid waste operations, these are considered separate business entities funded through service charges. Information regarding these entities can be found in Section 3.6, Public Infrastructure.

CITY OF BIG TIMBER FISCAL YEAR 2007/2008 REVENUE

City Revenues for Fiscal Year 07/08

State Entitlement/Gas Tax	\$200,731	29%
City Court Collections	\$19,609	3%
City Pool fees	\$12,170	2%
City Property Taxes	\$372,497	53%
Investment and royalty earnings	\$36,002	5%
Other-Fees, licenses, misc	\$17,048	2%
County's Library Share	\$35,926	5%
Public Works Street Sweeping on MDT ROW	\$4,981	1%
TOTAL REVENUES	\$698,964	100%

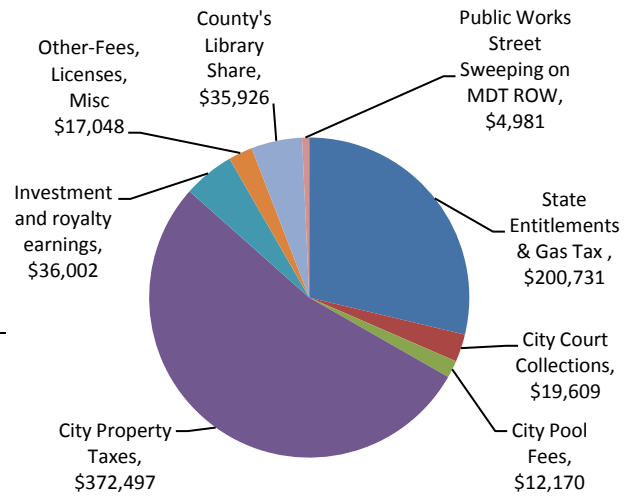


Figure 3-13 City of Big Timber 2007/2008 Revenue

Big Timber Expenditures for Fiscal Year 07/08

City Administration	\$48,215	8%
Justice Court	\$23,020	4%
Planning Office	\$6,000	1%
Law Enforcement	\$129,500	21%
Fire Protection	\$23,846	4%
Streets	\$60,176	10%
Airport	\$5,500	1%
Public Health	\$5,500	1%
Animal Control	\$19,293	3%
Library	\$95,256	16%
Parks	\$67,007	11%
Miscellaneous	\$119,578	20%
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$602,891	100%

CITY OF BIG TIMBER FISCAL YEAR 2007/2008 EXPENDITURES

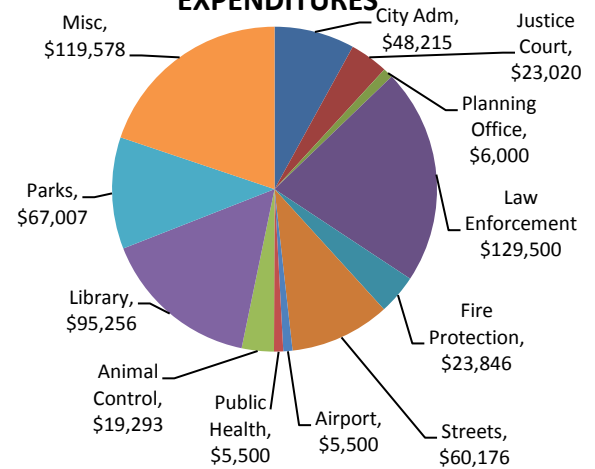


Figure 3-14 City of Big Timber 2007/2008 Expenditures

In 2008 Big Timber's assessed valuation totaled \$117,636,345 which translated into a taxable valuation totaling \$3,648,372. As part of the Stillwater Mining Company Metal Mine Impact Plan the City receives property taxes based on a portion of the mine's value. The City's portion of Stillwater Mining Company's property valuation totaled \$687,360 in 2008. The City also received taxable valuation from the gross proceeds of Stillwater Mining Company's production. In 2008 gross proceeds increased the taxable valuation by \$500,407 making the company's total taxable valuation for the City \$1,187,767. The mining company's total portion of the City's 2008 tax revenue was \$127,435 or 33% of total tax revenue for the City.

The chart below shows Big Timber's sources of tax revenues by category for 2008.

CITY OF BIG TIMBER - SOURCES OF 2008 TAX REVENUES

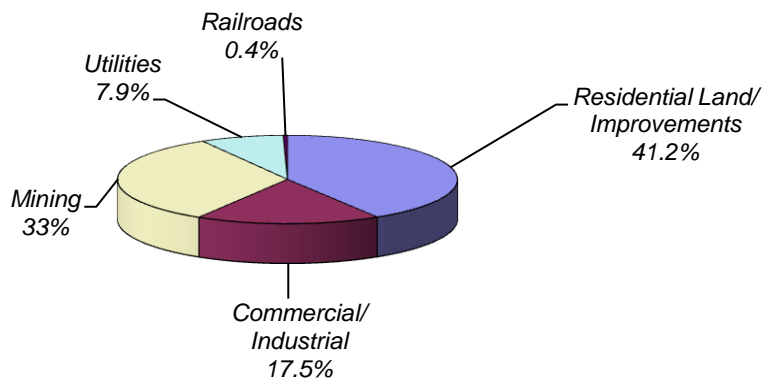


Figure 3-15 City of Big Timber's Sources of Tax Revenue

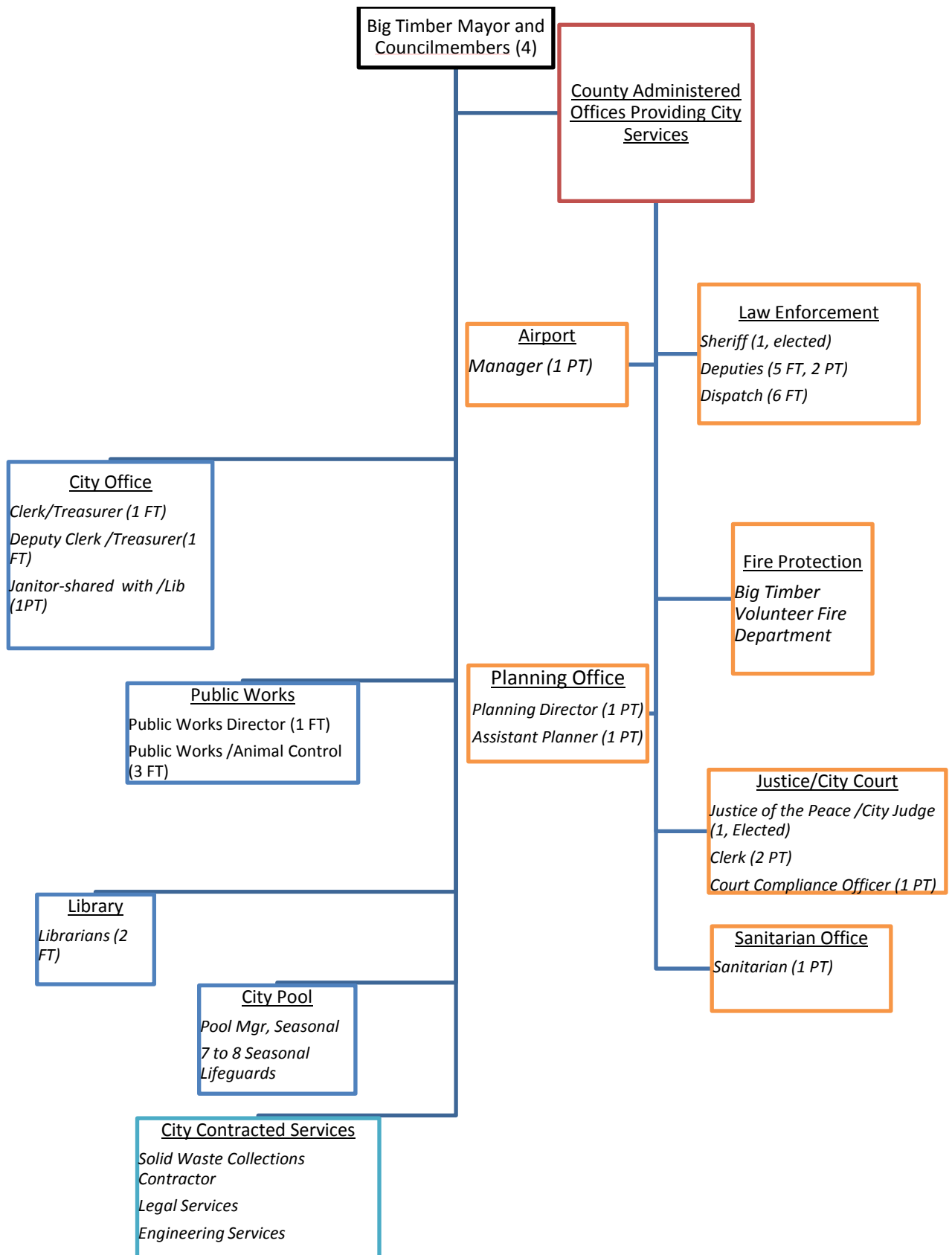


Figure 3-16 City of Big Timber Organization Chart

3.5.2 ADVISORY BOARDS

In addition to the services performed by City and County employees and elected officials, the City of Big Timber and Sweet Grass County jointly utilize several advisory boards consisting of citizen volunteers. These boards include the following:

- Airport Board
- Chemical Dependency Board
- Cemetery Board
- City-County Planning Board
- County Planning Board
- Fair Board
- Health Board
- Library Board
- Mental Health Board
- PMC Board
- Tax Appeal Board
- Weed Board

Big Timber also maintains a Board of Adjustments to administer variance requests pertaining to the Big Timber Zoning Ordinance.

3.5.3 LOCAL SERVICES

Local services other than public works services such as water, sewer and solid waste are provided jointly by the County and the City of Big Timber. Interlocal agreements are in place for law enforcement and fire protection. The Sheriff Department is administered by the County and funded jointly by Big Timber and the County. The City of Big Timber pays the County annually for its share of funding for the Sheriff Department from its tax and fee revenues. The Big Timber Fire Department is administered by the City. The County contributes its share to the fire protection funding.

Other services provided by the County that are available to Big Timber residents are listed below. These services are funded by County tax revenues and fee collections from all County residents including those living in Big Timber.

County services available in Big Timber:

- Weed Control
- Senior Citizens Center
- Cemeteries
- Pioneer Medical Center
- Emergency Medical Services
- Disaster and Emergency Services
- Social Services and Public Assistance
- Mental Health/ Addictive Disorder Treatment
- Airport

The City of Big Timber provides library services at the Big Timber Carnegie Library. The library is funded jointly by Big Timber and the County.

In addition to the locally provided services are those provided by State and Federal agencies. State offices located in Big Timber include:

- Montana Department of Revenue
- Montana Department of Highway Maintenance Office
- Conservation District Office

Federal offices located in Big Timber include:

- o Forest Service
- o USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service
- o Farm Service Agency
- o U. S. Postal Service.

Private utility companies, Northwestern Energy, Triangle Communications and Cable Montana also have maintenance offices located in Big Timber.

A brief description of these services in Big Timber follows below.

County Agencies

Law Enforcement The Sheriff Department provides law enforcement for the County and the City of Big Timber under an interlocal agreement. The department includes the Sheriff, five full-time deputies, two part-time deputies, six full-time dispatchers, and 15 reserve officers for enforcement at special events. The sheriff and deputies are all stationed in Big Timber, and an officer is on duty or on call 24 hours per day. In the past, each officer drove his own vehicle, which he leased to the County. The County is currently transitioning to take over vehicle ownership as vehicle replacements become due. A 911 emergency number serves the City and entire County. The Sheriff Department also administers the Department of Emergency Services, Coroner Services and Civil Defense.

There is a small jail facility located in the courthouse. The jail facility does not meet federal corrections standards. The Sheriff Department is allowed to detain only male prisoners in the jail for no more than 72 hours. Prisoners that must be detained for longer periods are transported to other counties, usually Park County. The County is in critical need of new or updated jail space to house prisoners. Feasibility studies are necessary to evaluate alternatives such as building a new jail, renovating the existing jail or contracting with an adjacent County for jail use while maintaining only minimal holding space for use while arranging transport to the contract jail facilities.

Emergency Medical Services The County's EMS group is an organization consisting of one part-time employee and volunteers and provides emergency medical services (EMS) to the City of Big Timber and the County. Presently, there are 30 volunteers in the EMS program who are registered emergency medical technicians (EMTs). Up to 3 EMTs are on call at any one time, 24

hours a day and are paid when they respond to a call. Most of the EMT budget comes from fees charged for service.

The EMS program uses the 911 emergency number. The unit has three vehicles: a 1997 type 3 ambulance, a 2000 type 3 ambulance and a 1987 4x4 Type 1 ambulance. Fixed-wing and helicopter air ambulance services are provided to Deaconess Hospital and St. Vincent's Hospital in Billings.

The County's Ambulance Building is located at 5 Hooper Street. The building was built 10 years ago through a low interest loan. The ambulance building is 3,200 square feet and houses 3 ambulances, storage, restroom facilities and office space.

Ambulance calls for the County have increased over the past years as shown in the below graph. In 2008 there were 371 calls.

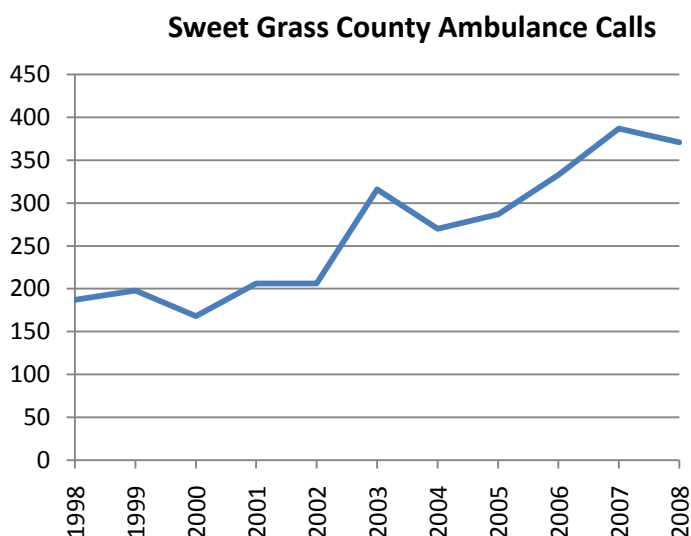


Figure 3-17 County Ambulance Calls from 1998 to 2008

Disaster and Emergency Services

Disaster and Emergency Services (DES) employs one director. The Sheriff acts as the deputy director. The agency coordinates emergency response planning among the various City, County, private, state, and federal agencies; coordinates the preparation and updating of the City/County emergency operations plan; assists with preparedness drills and exercises; coordinates public and emergency information during local emergencies; coordinates planning and response activities for the County emergency operations center; and assists with recovery operations following disasters. The DES director is the County representative on the South Central Montana Interoperability Consortium, a consortium of five counties (Sweet Grass, Park, Gallatin, Meagher, and Madison) that work toward improving communications capabilities throughout the five-County region. DES assists with writing and managing grants available to improve public safety.

Weed Control The City contracts with a private weed sprayer to spray City owned properties. The Sweet Grass County weed control program is administered by a County weed district governed by a weed board, and staffed by a full-time weed supervisor.

Social Services and Public Assistance The Sweet Grass County Office of Public Assistance is located in the Courthouse Annex Building at 115 West 5th Avenue and offers the following programs: Families Achieving Independence in Montana (FAIM), Medicaid, foster care, and food stamps. Sweet Grass County receives 20 percent of the director's time (the director also serves Stillwater and Carbon Counties). Sweet Grass also receives 65 percent of the available staff time from a FAIM coordinator and 50 percent of staff time from an eligibility assistant. The Sweet Grass County Department of Family Services offers adult protective services, child protection services, and adoptive services. The staff includes one half time social worker and one half time social worker aide.

Senior Citizens Center Sweet Grass County is a member of the Area II Agency on Aging, a non-profit organization that receives federal and state funding. Big Timber's Hospitality House is a senior citizens' organization sponsored by the Area II Agency on Aging. The Hospitality House is located in a County owned building on McLeod Street and provides low cost homestyle lunches. Meal delivery is available in the City five days per week through Meals on Wheels which gets the meals from the Hospitality House. The Hospitality House also operates a mini bus that provides transportation around Big Timber and to Billings or Bozeman for appointments.

Mental Health/ Addictive Disorder Treatment A non-profit organization headquartered in Billings, the South Central Montana Regional Mental Health Center, Inc., provides mental health and addictive disorders counseling services to Sweet Grass County. The local office in the Courthouse Annex Building at 115 West 5th Avenue offers evaluation, counseling, and therapeutic services. One counselor visits Big Timber two days per week for mental health services and one counselor visits two days per week for addictive disorders counseling services.

The City currently contributes \$4,000 annually to the mental health/addictive disorders treatment services. The County contributes all liquor tax funds received by the state. A County wide mill levy of .18 is also allocated to these services. Remaining costs are paid with federal and state funding and user fees. Fees for service are based on the patient's gross annual income and the number of family members. The services include: crisis intervention, family counseling and training, outpatient counseling, preventive education programs to schools and community groups, and drug and alcohol abuse and DUI schools for offenders.

Cemeteries The County owns and operates two cemeteries, Mountain View located on the outskirts of Big Timber and the Reed Point Cemetery near Reed Point. The Mountain View Cemetery is approximately 7 acres and contains an estimated 6,000 gravesites. Approximately half of the gravesites are occupied. A 5-member board administers the cemeteries. Three members represent Mountain View Cemetery and two represent Reed Point Cemetery.

Pioneer Medical Center The Pioneer Medical Center (PMC) is a medical facility complex located at 301 West 7th Avenue in Big Timber that provides health care to City and County

residents. The Center consists of a 52-bed nursing home, an 8-bed critical care hospital unit (MAF), a medical clinic, a laboratory, a 16 unit assisted living facility and ambulance service. The Pioneer Medical Center's staffing is normally at approximately 70 full-time and 50 part-time employees. A helicopter pad is located adjacent to the hospital for air ambulance service to Billings. The PMC facility is a County owned medical service enterprise governed by an appointed board that reports to the Sweet Grass County Commissioners. With the exception of the physicians, the staff are County employees. Physicians servicing the center are either individually contracted or are employees of Livingston Healthcare.

The PMC is self sufficient for many medical situations and provides a full range of services including outpatient surgery, acute care, 24 hour emergency, laboratory, respite care, adult day care, hospice, physical, occupational and speech therapy, and cardiac stress testing. Specialty clinics are provided periodically and include internal medicine, gynecology, orthopedics, cardiology, urology, audiology, podiatry and dermatology. The PMC maintains affiliations with Park Clinic and Livingston Healthcare in Livingston and Deaconess Billings Clinic and St. Vincent's Healthcare in Billings.

The PMC is partially supported by a County-wide 25 mill tax levy which is set to expire in 2011. Due to an economic downturn that began in the fall of 2008 and fluctuating nursing home vacancies, PMC has begun operating at a loss. In April of 2009 the County Commissioners decided to ask voters to increase the PMC mill levy by another 25 mills in order to continue operation of the PMC facility while other funding alternatives are explored. The ballots for this request are expected to go out during the third quarter of 2009. The additional 25 mills will double taxes collected for the PMC for the one year prior to the expiration of the original 25 mill levy, then, just the new 25 mill levy will continue beyond that expiration.

City Agencies

Fire Protection Fire protection is provided by The Big Timber Volunteer Fire Department.(BTVFD). The Department is headquartered in Big Timber and provides fire protection services countywide with substations located in the Melville, McLeod and Bridger Creek areas. The BTVFD is supported by the City of Big Timber and the County and has an Insurance Service Organization (ISO) rating of 5. One-third of the Department's funding for capital expenditures comes from County funds, one-third from the City, and one-third from private donations.

The Big Timber station has 40 volunteers and there are another 56 volunteers throughout the County. In 2008 the Department responded to 93 fire calls countywide. The Department maintains the following equipment at Big Timber:

TRUCK #	ENGINE TYPE	DESCRIPTION/YEAR	TANK CAPACITY	4X4	Location
FIRE 1	TYPE 1	2000 KENWORTH T 300	1000 Gal	Yes	Big Timber
FIRE 2	TYPE 1	GMC TOP KICK 1983	900 Gal	No	Big Timber
FIRE 3	TYPE 6	WHITE MOTOR CO. 1964	1500 Gal	Yes	Big Timber
FIRE 4	COMMAND	SUBURBAN ½ ton		Yes	Big Timber
FIRE 5	TYPE 6	2007 FORD F450	300 Gal	Yes	Big Timber

FIRE 6	TENDER	79 FORD LT 9000	3000 Gal	No	Big Timber
FIRE 7	COMMAN D	F350 Ford		Yes	Big Timber
FIRE 8	TYPE 3	2008 F-550 DNRC	300 Gal	Yes	Big Timber
FIRE 9	TYPE 3	2008 IH Tank	1000	Yes	Big Timber
FIRE 10	TYPE 6	2006 FORD F550	300 Gal	Yes	Big Timber
FIRE 11	TYPE 3	INTERNATIONAL 2005	1000 Gal	Yes	Big Timber
FIRE 12	Type 1 Ladder	PIERCE ARROW 55' ARIAL	1000Gal	No	Big Timber

The department has adequate equipment and personnel to serve the population of Big Timber and the vicinity.

Library The Carnegie Public Library provides library services for Big Timber and the County. The library building was originally constructed in 1913 with a Carnegie grant. An expansion was completed in 2007 which included updated restrooms, emergency exits, added comfortable reading and lingering space, a community meeting room, additional space for books, and more computers for universal access. The City and County jointly fund the library, with the County providing 40 percent of the funding and Big Timber providing the remaining 60 percent. Five trustees, three appointed by the City council and two appointed by the County commissioners, govern the operation of the library. The library is staffed by two full-time employees.

City of Big Timber Public Works The City's Public Works Department performs general operating and maintenance duties for the water and wastewater systems, streets and parks and recreation facilities. The Department also oversees animal control. They collect and submit required data for state reporting concerning water and effluents, perform daily system checks on the water and wastewater systems, gather monthly water meter readings and conduct fire hydrant flow checks. Parks and recreation duties include maintenance of the pool, lawn sprinklers and lawn care. Street maintenance includes patching, sweeping, snow removal, alley grading and sign maintenance. Other duties include care of the compost, burn piles and steel collection at the solid waste collection site.

State Offices

Department of Revenue – County Appraiser The Montana Department of Revenue employs one part-time Appraiser and one part-time Property Evaluation Specialist in Big Timber. These employees are responsible for determining the taxable value of property in the County. The office identifies and values new construction of real property and audits existing real and personal property for taxing purposes. Information about property ownership, taxable value and tax relief programs are also available from this office.

Department of Transportation-Highway Maintenance The Montana Department of Transportation employs six highway maintenance workers in Big Timber. This crew is responsible for maintenance and minor repair of Interstate 90, state primary routes and paved state secondary roads within the County. Maintenance responsibilities include snowplowing, repairing signs, guardrails and right-of-way fences, and patching pavement. A maintenance shop and sand shed are located in Big Timber

Sweet Grass County Conservation District The Sweet Grass County Conservation District is one of 58 political subdivisions in the state, which helps local residents conserve their soil, water and other renewable resources. A board of supervisors composed of five, County- elected officials serves the district. Funding for the board comes from 1.5 mills levied on real property within the district. The Conservation District also administers the State 310 Permit (Montana Natural Streambed and Land Preservation Act), required for any work proposed in or near a stream. The local office is located in Big Timber.

Federal Offices

USDA Forest Service

The Big Timber Ranger District is headquartered in Big Timber and has a staff of nine full time employees, five permanent seasonal employees and additional seasonal summer hirings which ranges from 4 to 16 employees.

USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service The Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) is a federal agency that works with private landowners to help protect their natural resources. The NRCS has a field office in Big Timber. The Big Timber office is staffed by five full time employees. The Sweet Grass Conservation District Administrator is also located in this office.

Farm Service Agency The USDA Farm Service Agency is another land and water conservation agency helping farmers and ranchers stabilize income and providing credit to new or disadvantaged agricultural operators. The agency also administers federal disaster assistant loans. The Farm Service Agency office is located in Big Timber. This agency is governed by a 3-member local board elected by local agricultural producers. The office has one full time employee and one part time employee who is shared with the Stillwater County office.

US Postal Service In 2000 the U.S. Postal Service completed construction of a new post office in Big Timber, replacing an outdated office which was at capacity. To date, approximately 70% of the new facility's 2000 boxes are rented.

Private Utilities

Private companies provide electricity, gas, telephone, and solid waste collection and disposal in Big Timber. Northwestern Energy is the primary provider of electricity and natural gas.

Telephone service is provided through Triangle Communications and several long distance providers. Triangle Communications also provides DSL internet service. Cable television and high speed cable internet services are available in Big Timber through Cable Montana.

Allied Waste provides solid waste services.

3.5.4 PROJECTED TRENDS FOR LOCAL SERVICES

Population and economic growth in Big Timber and the County will increase needs from most local services. The increased burden on a service is affected by both the population increase and the location of the new populations or business developments. Actual tax revenues do not always meet the income needs for maintenance of public services. Although growth does

increase tax revenue, it may not always translate into sufficient tax revenue to meet public service needs.

The demand for most local services comes not just from full-time residents, but also from seasonal residents and visitors. Given the projections of continued population and economic growth, local services can expect to see greater demands for service. In many cases, lack of resources to meet the demands will continue to be a challenge for all municipalities. Capital improvements planning by the City of Big Timber as well as the County and other local service providers is vital and will promote cost-effective investments.

3.6 PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE

3.6.1 TRANSPORTATION

Routes To and From Big Timber

Interstate 90 provides east-west transportation to and from Big Timber. The City is served by two interchanges off of Interstate 90, located east and west of the City limits. U.S. Highway 191 is a highway route leading north from Big Timber to Harlowton, and Highway 298 is a state secondary highway that provides travel south from Big Timber to the Boulder River valley.

Traffic count information for the I-90 interchanges and the highways that intersect in Big Timber are shown in the below table

Route	Location	2000	2007
I-90	West Big Timber Interchange	6820	8060
I-90	East Big Timber Interchange	7510	8910
US 10	Big Timber City Limits, west	3010	3830
US 10	Junction of Main Boulder	3750	4960
US 10	Junction of US 191	2270	2490
US 10	Big Timber City Limits, east	1820	1960
US 191	Junction of US 10	1980	2310
Main Boulder	Junction US 10	1953	1820
Main Boulder	Big Timber City Limits, south	493	370

Annual daily traffic counts for state primary and secondary highways in Sweet Grass County (Montana Department of Transportation)

Big Timber's Principal Local Streets and Roads

Big Timber has a total of 15.2 miles of paved street in the City. The City owns 13.5 miles of the street and the remaining 1.7 miles are owned by the Montana Department of Transportation.

McLeod Street serves as the main street of Big Timber's business district, and is the principal north-south route through town. McLeod Street is part of state Highway 298 and is therefore maintained by the Montana Department of Transportation. McLeod Street handles all traffic coming from and going south to the Boulder valley along Highway 298. The present surface on McLeod Street has been raised so many times that angle parking, in the downtown area, has become hazardous during icy conditions. The angle parking along McLeod Street restricts the width of the driving lanes.

Available parking space in the business district along McLeod is marginal. The current angle parking has allowed on-street parking to meet most of the parking needs. But the angle parking is considered hazardous. Changing to parallel parking would allow safer traffic movement on McLeod as driving lanes would be wider and parallel parking creates less of a hazard when pulling out from the parking space. However, changing to parallel parking would eliminate a significant number of on-street parking spaces, and would increase the need for off-street parking. Unfortunately, there is little vacant land within the central business district to be used for public parking lots. The City has made improvements in order to increase available parking for the business district. One block of 2nd Avenue, from McLeod to Anderson Street, was reconstructed with curb, sidewalk and angle parking in order to increase parking for the McLeod business district. Handicapped parking was included on the east corner of McLeod and 2nd Avenue.

Big Timber Loop is the principal street providing east-west travel through Big Timber. Highway 10, connecting the I-90 interchanges on the east and west ends of the community, coincides with Big Timber Loop for seven blocks within the City limits. Much of the City's commercial activity is located along the Highway 10 corridor between the Boulder River and the west I-90 interchange.

Fourth Avenue is an east-west collector street that handles a large volume of traffic moving from the east and west side residential areas to the Big Timber Grade School, the high school, and the central business district on McLeod Street. Stock Street and Poplar Street receive considerable traffic volumes because of travel from 1st Avenue to the high school.

Highway 10 or Big Timber Loop Road functions as a frontage road since completion of the Interstate. Highway 10 provides access to properties located east and west of the City. Highways 191 and 298 provide access to properties north and south of Big Timber, respectively.

Based on an evaluation performed by Great West Engineering in 2008, approximately 50% of Big Timber's streets are rated as fair to good condition with the remainder rated as poor or worse. A few of the streets in Big Timber are paved with millings that the City received over the years from I-90 projects. Cold mix has also been used on streets. The City resurfaced some streets in recent years with asphalt. In 2003 street paving work included Quarry Street from 1st Avenue to 2nd Avenue, 2nd Avenue from McLeod Street to Anderson Street, Bridge Street from Hwy 191 to 3rd Avenue, Hooper Street from 1st Avenue to Railroad Street. The most recent street improvement project is the 5 ½ block reconstruction of Busha Street which followed the replacement of the water and sewer lines under Busha Street.

The City of Big Timber does not have bridges on its streets. None of the Big Timber intersections have traffic lights. Stop and yield signs are sufficient for intersection traffic control.

City Sidewalks

Approximately 40% of Big Timber's 15.2 miles of street have sidewalks on one or both sides of the road way.

In 2002 the City of Big Timber and Sweet Grass County used federal funds granted through the Community Transportation Enhancement Program (CTEP) to fund repairs and construction of new sidewalks along McLeod Street. New sidewalks were also constructed along the north side of East 5th Avenue from Bramble Street to the Post Office at 5th Avenue and Walnut Street.

Storm Drainage

Big Timber does not have a storm sewer system. A number of streets have drainage swales adjacent to street travel lanes. In some cases small-diameter pipes have been placed below the street surface to convey storm water across intersections. Often, however, run-off water reaches an intersection and either ponds or runs over the surface of the street. Storm water in the City tends to flow in a northeast direction, and it eventually drains into the Yellowstone River via the Highway 191 drainage ditch.

A storm drainage plan for Big Timber is not in place at this time. The preparation and maintenance of a storm drainage plan would be a helpful tool in providing guidance on future decisions regarding drainage issues and transportation upgrades.

RAIL SERVICE

A single rail line runs east and west along the north border of Big Timber. Montana Rail Link (MRL) provides freight service to Big Timber, primarily grain and log shipments. MRL has a maintenance office located in Big Timber which employs four full-time maintenance personnel. Burlington Northern/Sante Fe also runs trains through the County but does not provide local freight service. Approximately 14-24 freight trains can run through Big Timber daily.

AIRPORT

The Sweet Grass County operates a general aviation airport located three miles southwest of Big Timber. The 5,285 feet long landing strip is paved and lighted and can accommodate light aircraft and business-class jets. A second sod airstrip is 3,475 feet long and runs crosswise to the paved strip. The paved runway serves approximately 7,200 flights annually. A fixed base operator leases the airport for charter air flights, flight instruction, fuel, maintenance and agricultural spraying services. The County currently employs an airport manager on a part-time basis. There are ten hangers located at the airport and a paved tie-down apron for aircraft. The City of Big Timber owns a portion of the property that the airport is located on. The City leases the land to the County.

Needed Improvements for Transportation in Big Timber

Streets Historically City revenues allow for only maintenance work and minimal new construction or reconstruction of streets. As streets deteriorate from everyday use and as business and industry needs, as well as general population transportation increases, capital improvements will be necessary. Preparation for these improvements requires maintenance of a capital improvement plan for the City streets. In 2008 the City contracted with Great West Engineering to prepare a Capital Improvement Plan which prioritizes improvements to the City's street network. This plan was adopted by the City in February 2009. The next step to be

taken over future years will be acquiring funding and gradually completing the improvements outlined in the Capital Improvement Plan.

Sidewalks Deteriorated sidewalks can be hazardous, especially for elderly citizens. Big Timber and Sweet Grass County continue to receive annual allotments of Community Transportation Enhancement (CTEP) funds from the federal government which can be used for sidewalk replacement. The City and the County are each allotted approximated \$8,000 per year by CTEP. As these funds build up over years to an amount feasible for replacement projects, the City can plan additional projects. In 2009 the City will be utilizing CTEP funds to construct sidewalk along 2 blocks of Harris Street by the Big Timber Grade School.

Rail Service Rail service in Big Timber is not expected to undergo significant changes in upcoming years.

Airport The Big Timber Airport has been upgraded over the past years with federal FAA grant funding. The County is currently in the process of acquiring additional land, 18 acres, so fencing can be moved out on the west and east ends of the paved runway. Once this acquisition is complete the airport will meet B-2 Category requirements which allows larger aircraft landings. The land acquisition is being funded with an FAA Airport Improvement Grant. The County also recently constructed an airport office building.

3.6.2 BIG TIMBER WATER SYSTEM

Big Timber obtains municipal water from two sources, both from the Boulder River drainage. The primary source is an infiltration gallery with a peak supply rate of 2.1 million gallons per day, approximately seven miles south of the City. The water flows by gravity to a chlorinator house where chlorine is added by an automatic chlorinator. A seven mile long transmission line of 14-inch pipe conveys the water by gravity from the chlorinator to a storage tank located south of the City. The gallery was originally constructed in 1934, and refurbished in 1959 and 1965.

The second source of water is an infiltration gallery located at the south end of McLeod Street. This source is rarely needed to meet Big Timber's demand rates. Chlorine is added by a chlorinator that operates in conjunction with two vertical turbine pumps, which pump the water into the distribution system. The original gallery was constructed near the turn of the century and new galleries were built in 1981.

With the population at 1,801 for 2007, there are currently 998 water users connected to the City water system. Additionally, there are approximately 120 multi-unit dwellings on the water system that are not included in the 998 user count since the count is based on hookups to the City supply lines. The capacity of the upper galleries depends on the level of the Boulder River and varies from 1,200 gallons per minute (gpm) to 400 gpm, with flows ranging from 400-700 gpm. The pumps at the lower gallery have 600 gpm capacity. The two sources of water can provide an average summer combined quantity of 1,300 gpm (700 upper gallery and 600 lower gallery).

The steel storage tank, with a capacity of 650,000 gallons, was built in 1981, using City revenue bonds. The storage tank was refurbished in 2006.

In 2000, Big Timber installed water meters to all user locations. The installation of meters greatly reduced the water usage levels. In 2007 water usage ranged from 0.14 million gallons per day (MGD) in the middle of winter to 1.08 MGD in the peak usage month of July. Reports prior to the installation of the water meters showed usages ranging from 0.45 MGD in the winter to close to 3 MGD in the summer.

Water rates charged by the City have not changed since 1997. The revenues generated by charges adequately covers the general operation of the water system but is not adequate to cover capital improvements/replacement needs in future years. These types of improvements can include upgrades to the intake facility, maintenance work on the storage tank, fire hydrant replacements and pipeline replacements in the streets. The City will need to review the service rates periodically to be certain that the existing water distribution system can be maintained in future years.

Expenditures and revenues for the water system during fiscal year 2007/2008 are shown in the below chart. Most of the capital outlay shown in the expenditures for that year went toward the water line replacement project along Busha Street and painting the water storage tank.

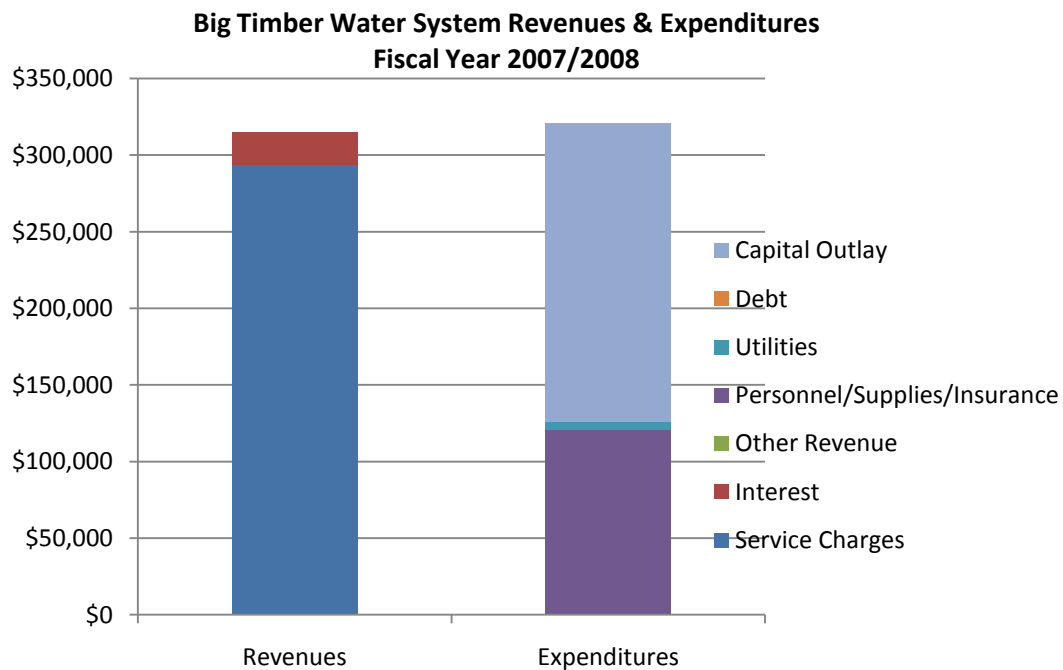


Figure 3-18 Big Timber Water System Revenue and Expenditures for FY 2007/2008

Needed Improvements for the Big Timber Water System:

Big Timber recently contracted with the engineering firm, Great West Engineering, to prepare a Preliminary Engineering Report on its water system. This report was completed in June 2008 and is available for viewing in the City Hall. The report provides a current evaluation of the City's water system and identifies the needs of the water system.

3.6.3 BIG TIMBER SEWAGE SYSTEM

In 1995, the City of Big Timber hired an engineering firm, Morrison and Maierle, Inc., to prepare a review of its wastewater treatment capabilities and to prepare a Capital Improvement Plan for its collection system. The review identified phases for expansion of treatment capabilities and identified priority piping and manhole replacement needs in the collection system throughout the City.

In 1999 a follow-up review of Big Timber's wastewater treatment capabilities was conducted by Morrison and Maierle and the results indicated an immediate need for replacement of the lagoon system in order to eliminate serious leakage problems and to prepare for population growth. In 2000, Big Timber constructed four lined aerated sewage lagoons at its existing lagoon site on the east end on the City. The system was designed to handle a population of 2,050 based on a per capita flow rate of 190 gallons per day. Later phases could bring the capacity up to a population of 3000. The 2000 expansion project was funded with assistance from grant programs such as the Montana's Treasure State Endowment Program (TSEP), a Community Development Block Grant from the federal government and a grant from Stillwater Mining Company.

As part of the lagoon system replacement and expansion, a new trunk line was installed from the lagoon site to the undeveloped area directly west of the City limits so that developers in this area would be able to connect to the City's sewage disposal network. This project prepared Big Timber for future growth in regard to sewage treatment facilities.

City revenues and expenditures from the wastewater system for fiscal year 2007/2008 are shown in the below chart. During the 2007/2008 year there was \$115,688 spent on capital outlays which is mostly attributed to a sewer line replacement project along Busha Street.

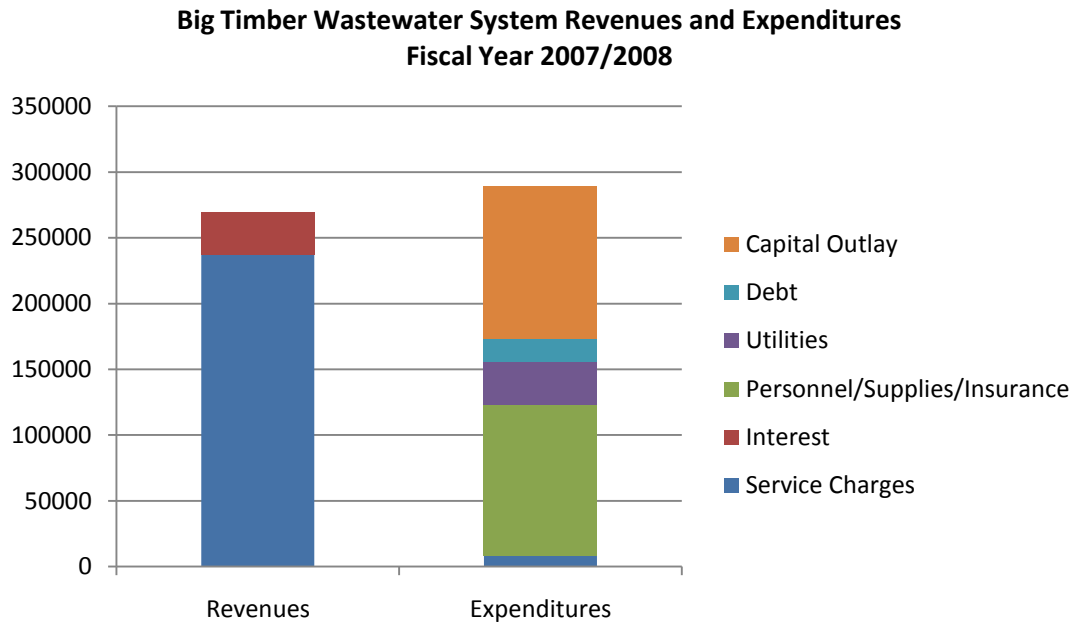


Figure 3-19 Big Timber Wastewater System Revenues and Expenditures for FY 2007/2008

Needed Improvements for the Big Timber Wastewater System:

Most of the priority replacements identified in the 1995 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for the City's existing collection system have been completed by the City. The City recently contracted with the firm Great West Engineering to prepare a new Capital Improvement Plan for the wastewater system that will guide officials in future years. This CIP, which was adopted in February 2009, will also provide an idea of costs ahead for maintenance of the system which will be useful information in reviewing whether service rates are adequate.

3.6.4 SOLID WASTE COLLECTION AND DISPOSAL

The City of Big Timber operates a solid waste transfer station located on the east end of the City and south of the sewer lagoons. The City provides weekly door-to-door waste collection for residences, and more frequent collection for commercial users, through a private solid waste collection company, Allied Waste. This company performs the door-to-door pick up service, operates the transfer station and hauls the garbage to a landfill in Gallatin County at Logan, Montana. This company also contracts with individuals in rural areas beyond the City limits for garbage collection. During the 2007/2008 fiscal year, the City paid for hauling 2,400 tons of garbage to the Logan Landfill. A portion of that tonnage was from Allied Waste's County collection service and the City was reimbursed for that haulage.

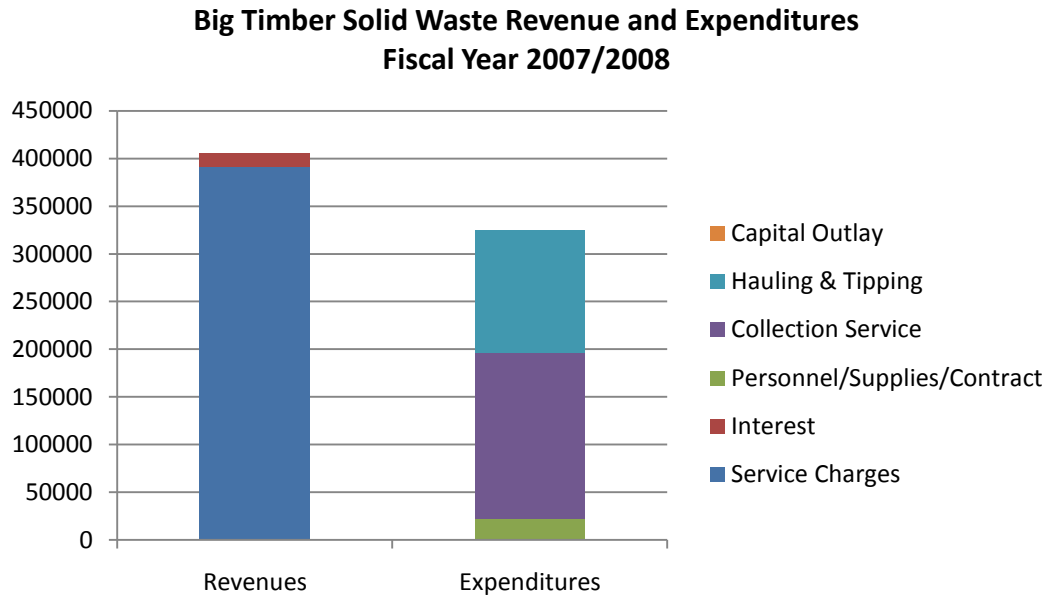


Figure 3-20 Big Timber Solid Waste Revenues and Expenditures for FY 2007/2008

Needed Improvements:

Expenditures in recent years for the solid waste collection service in Big Timber have been running close to or almost above the revenues collected by monthly service charges to residents and businesses. Annual inflation and higher fuel prices cause increased costs which the City may not be able to control. Reduction in the volume of garbage would help reduce costs and the City is currently making an effort to reduce the volume of solid waste from City residents and business by promoting a comprehensive recycling program. The service charge structure for City residents and businesses has not changed since 1995. The City is currently considering a bag collection system to better cover the rising costs of solid waste disposal. This system would require residents to purchase bags for pick up.

3.6.5 CITY HALL

The City of Big Timber operates out of the City Hall building located at 103 East 3rd Avenue. The City Hall contains the clerical offices, Council meeting room and file storage. In 2009, the Public Works office and maintenance garage will be moving to a new location by the City wastewater lagoons at the end of 3rd Avenue.

3.6.6 PARKS AND RECREATION

The City of Big Timber owns and maintains the only developed community park in the County, the Big Timber Lion's Club Park. This park is 4.8 acres in size and includes a public swimming pool with bathhouse, a ball field, horseshoe courts, tennis courts, a half basketball court and picnic facilities. The City of Big Timber also owns a picnic/campground area that is 0.8 acres in size and located adjacent to the Boulder River bridge crossing on the Old Boulder River Road. In 2008, a basketball court was constructed on a piece of City property located on the City's east side at 3rd Avenue and Bridge Street.

Overland Golf Course is a nine-hole public course located east of Big Timber. A private, non-profit golf association operates the County-owned course. The course was built with Federal Bureau of Outdoor Recreation funds and matching local funds raised by a community fund drive.

Located just north of Big Timber, Sweet Grass County has a 25 acre fairground site which is used for the annual 4-H Fair, rodeos and other events such as picnics.

The former high school gymnasium located on Hooper Street and 3rd Avenue is now the Civic Center. It is operated by Sweet Grass County High School. This facility is well used for activities such as volleyball, basketball and indoor walking. Community meetings and blood drives are also conducted at the Civic Center. The basement of the Civic Center is used for firearm and bow shooting practice and competitions. The Civic Center utilities (lights and heating) are funded by Sweet Grass County High School and through use fees.

City Club Lanes, a private bowling facility, operates six bowling lanes. Leagues are organized for team play during the winter months.

Youth sports leagues in Big Timber include baseball, softball, soccer, basketball and football. These leagues are run by non-profit organizations utilizing volunteer board members who organize and operate the leagues. The youth sports leagues, including youth from the entire County, have experienced growth in recent years and have struggled in scheduling field space for practices and games in each of the activities. Leagues currently utilize City Park and high school fields for practices and games. The City Park has one softball field and the high school has two baseball fields.

A new organization called the Community Outdoor Recreation Association (CORA) was created in 2007 in Big Timber. CORA has acquired lands for park space on the east end of Big Timber and is planning and fund raising for development of the park area. The City of Big Timber is developing park space on its property located between the sewer lagoons and the Boulder River. The City has appointed a committee to oversee development plans of this area, which is designated as Dornix Park. A master plan for Dornix Park has been completed.

In addition to the parks maintained by Big Timber for recreational use, there are fishing accesses owned by the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks along the Boulder River and Yellowstone River and campground sites maintained by the U.S. Forest Service within nearby Forest Service lands.

3.6.7 PROJECTED TRENDS FOR PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE

Big Timber has been proactive in the past in seeking funding assistance from grant programs such as TSEP, CBDG and CTEP and other state or federal grant programs to plan for and to rebuild deteriorating areas of its infrastructure and continues to work at updating infrastructure as funding allows. Future needs will require that the City Council continue to focus on the replacement needs of the water, wastewater, streets and sidewalks through use of good inventory assessments and capital improvement plans that prioritize needs. Big Timber is fortunate to have community members and organizations involved in meeting the needs for

parks and recreation. Coordination with these members and organizations and the City Council will allow the advancement regarding parks to continue.

3.7 PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Two schools are located in Big Timber, the Big Timber Grade School for kindergarten through 8th grade students and the Sweet Grass County High School. Over the last hundred years, as Sweet Grass County developed, as many as 69 school districts were created and abandoned. As of the 2007-08 school year, only four grade school districts and one high school district serve Sweet Grass County. The Big Timber Grade School District is one of the remaining four grade school districts and the other three are small rural school districts; Melville, McLeod and Greycliff. As alternative to public schooling, some children are educated through home schooling. During the 2007-2008 school year the County had a total of 17 students in the kindergarten through 8th grade range and four high school level students reported in home schooling.

3.7.1 SWEET GRASS COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL

The Sweet Grass County High School (SGHS) provides secondary education to students in grades 9 through 12. The district was originally organized in 1902, but the school building was not constructed until 1904. Over the next 50 years, the original building, located on West 4th Avenue and Hooper Street, was added to and remodeled substantially. By the 1970's the building could no longer accommodate the expanding educational needs of Sweet Grass County and plans were developed for a new building. The new facility, located on the west edge of town, was completed in 1981. There are 18 classrooms, two vocational laboratories, a gymnasium and locker rooms, kitchen and lunchroom, music room and four administrative offices. Associated athletic facilities include a football field with surrounding track, a field events/soccer field and two baseball fields. The athletic teams are called the "Shepherders" in recognition of the role the sheep industry played in the development of the County. The school has a capacity of 220 students. Enrollment for the 2007-08 school year was 203 students. The high school graduation rate for 2005 was 92.9%. The state average for 2005 was 86.2%.

The School District owns and operates 10 school buses that serve 6 bus routes. The school is responsible for providing transportation to students that live more than 3 miles from the school building. High school and grade school students from all districts share the use of the buses.

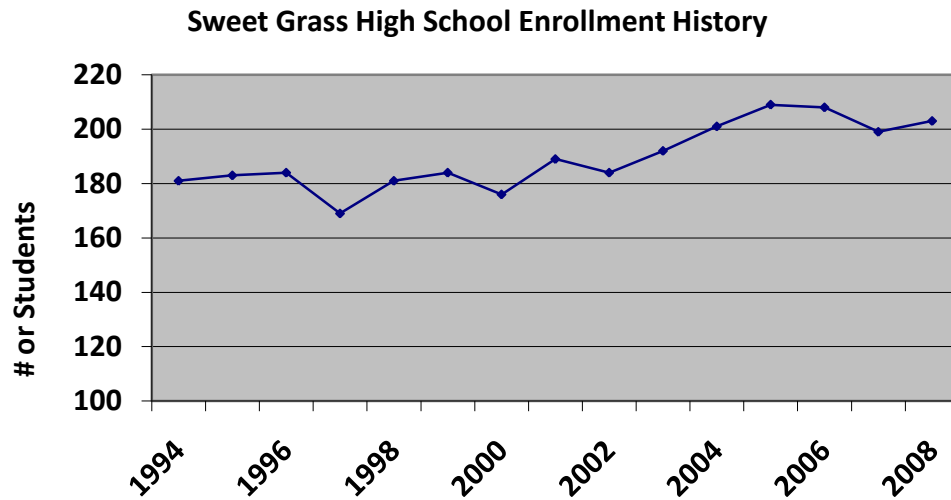


Figure 3-21 Sweet Grass High School Enrollments

3.7.2 BIG TIMBER GRADE SCHOOL – DISTRICT 1

The first grade school in Big Timber was located on McLeod Street. The small, two room building was erected in 1884. In 1881, a two-story brick schoolhouse was built and served an area slightly larger than a township around Big Timber. Presently, District 1 encompasses over ten townships stretching from the County boundary on the west to within 3 miles of the east boundary. The existing facility, located between East 5th and 6th Avenues and Anderson and Harris Streets was constructed in 1953 and contains 21 classrooms. Two modular classrooms were added in 2001 to offset enrollments increases due to the immigration of workforce for Stillwater Mining Company’s East Boulder Project. Grades 1 through 8 have two classrooms each, and there is one classroom each for kindergarten, music, and special education. The facility includes gymnasium and support rooms. The Grade School enrollment was 351 as of October 2008. The capacity of the school, prior to the two classroom modular addition, was estimated at approximately 380 students.

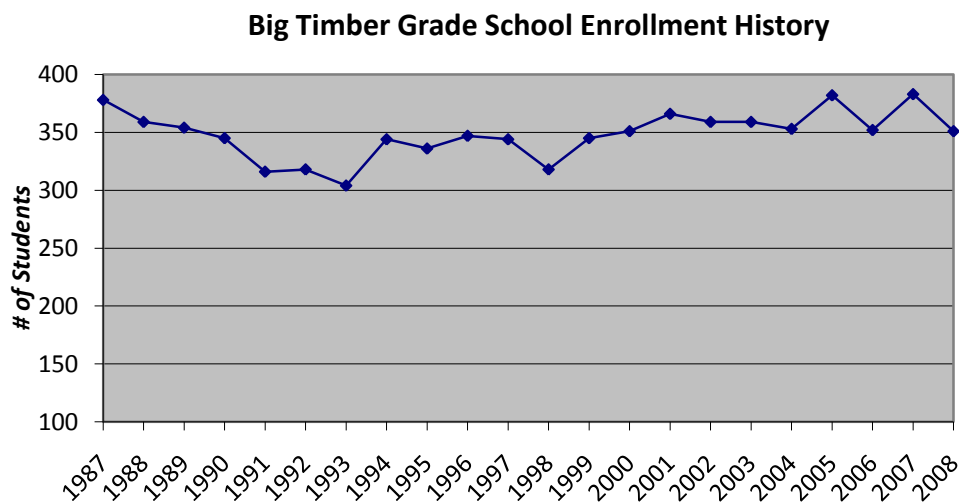


Figure 3-22 Big Timber Grade School Fall Enrollments

3.8 NATURAL RESOURCES

3.8.1 *DESCRIPTIONS*

Descriptions of natural resources such as soils, geology, surface and ground water, irrigation facilities, vegetation and wildlife in Big Timber and the County are covered in depth in the Sweet Grass County Growth Policy.

3.8.2 *PROJECTED TRENDS FOR NATURAL RESOURCES*

Efforts to conserve and efficiently utilize natural resources will continue. Public awareness of the impact of their actions on our resources appears to be increasing. One of the most important natural resources Big Timber relies on is the water of the Boulder River. Big Timber should be actively involved in protection of this resource. The City is currently completing a Source Water Protection Plan for both intake locations on the Boulder River used for City water supply. It is also important to continue awareness and compliance with state and federal laws that have been enacted to protect natural resources so that Big Timber is responsible in conducting its affairs in a manner that does not cause pollution in Big Timber or beyond.

4 CITY OF BIG TIMBER GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

4.1 GENERAL

The goals and objectives set forth in this chapter establish the guiding principles for elected officials, City staff and citizen boards responsible for providing services, managing growth, and protecting the health, safety and welfare of Big Timber residents.

The Big Timber City Council shall be guided by and give consideration to the general policy expressed by these goals and objectives in all decisions and in the adoption of regulations affecting Big Timber and its resources. In addition to providing guidance in decision making, the adoption of these goals and objectives provides a basis for continuing current policies and activities as well as initiates the need for new actions by the City of Big Timber in initiating future policies and actions necessary to support the goals and objectives. In place or on-going and recommended policies and actions are listed for each subject included in this chapter.

The goals and objectives in this Growth Policy have been categorized into the following primary subjects: Land Use, Housing, Environment and Natural Resources, Economic Development and Public Infrastructure and Services. For each of these subjects, this chapter includes a goal or goals, objectives and an implementation strategy for achieving the goals and objectives.

As used in this Growth Policy, the following definitions apply:

Goal: A general statement that embodies the values and principles agreed to by the City of Big Timber as they pertain to the primary subjects of land use, the environment, natural resources, economic development, and public infrastructure and services .

Objective: A statement that specifies priority issues and concerns related to the primary subjects and their goals, offering general direction concerning the consequences desired by adopting the listed goals.

Strategy for Implementation: A non-exhaustive list of current policies and recommended actions that provides methods for implementing support of the goals and objectives. The policies and actions included in the list are examples that support the intent of the specified goals. Some of these policies and efforts are currently in place and shown as “in place or on-going”. The City of Big Timber intends to perform the implementation strategies utilizing current staff positions and board members along with volunteer assistance. The timetable for completion or adoption of new recommended actions, not currently on-going, will be dependent on the workload and schedule of these individuals. It is the intent of Big Timber’s City Council to implement each recommended action, based on favorable

review findings, within the duration of the Growth Policy term which is scheduled to end five years from the adoption of the Policy. One should keep in mind that as actions are implemented, new actions may be discovered that should also be incorporated into the implementation strategies.

4.2 GOALS & OBJECTIVES

4.2.1 LAND USE

Goal

- ❖ *Promote good land use policy that will provide for orderly residential, commercial, industrial and recreational expansions within Big Timber in a manner that most efficiently utilizes and enhances the City's infrastructure and qualities.*

Objectives

- a) Promote well designed residential, commercial and industrial subdivisions through the use of master plans and continued application and refinement of local subdivision regulations and the Big Timber Zoning Ordinance.
- b) Maintenance of plans that provide future space for expansion of residential, commercial, industrial, recreational and public facilities on lands within or adjacent to the City of Big Timber.
- c) To maintain the pleasant environment of the area by assuring future open space and planning development to enhance the beauty of the area.

Implementation Strategy for Land Use Goals & Objectives:

Policies/Actions In Place or On-Going:

- a) Continue efforts to master plan urban growth areas adjacent to Big Timber and plan for the development of infrastructure and local services within those areas.
- b) Maintain the City of Big Timber Zoning Ordinance and zoning districts to coincide with use needs and social and economic trends of the Big Timber area.

Recommended New Actions:

- a) Encourage planning that will provide appropriate separations or screening between residential, commercial, and industrial areas.
- b) Establish a program for improvement of appearance of entrances to the community.

4.2.2 HOUSING

Goal

- ❖ ***Encourage a diverse supply of safe and appealing housing areas for residents of all ages, needs, and income levels, including single-family homes, apartments, townhouses, mobile/manufactured homes and other types of housing with a special emphasis on maintaining neighborhood character and stability.***

Objectives

- a) To promote a variety of housing to meet the needs of different family, age, and income groups.
- b) To encourage planned housing developments which can be efficiently served by water, sewer, and other utilities.
- c) To promote appropriate and desirable locations for housing of various classifications.
- d) To encourage the development of housing for the elderly close to the Central Business District area.
- e) To ensure proper location of housing and residential areas through consideration of soils capability, flood plain limitations, and such other conditions which may be detrimental to the proposed development.
- f) To encourage maintenance and improvement of housing areas and existing residences.

Implementation Strategy for Housing Goals & Objectives:

Policies/Actions In Place or On-Going:

- a) Maintenance of the Big Timber Zoning Ordinance.
- b) Maintain master plans for areas adjacent to Big Timber and within the Big Timber Zoning District that contain adequate areas for expansion of all types of residential zoning classifications.

Recommended New Actions:

- a) Develop a housing plan to help meet the variety of housing needs of residents. including affordable housing.
- b) Examine programs available to conduct housing rehabilitation efforts.
- c) Investigate affordable housing assistance programs offered by state and federal agencies.
- d) Look into ways to inspire voluntary action by property owners to clean debris build up.

4.2.3 ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Goal

- ❖ *To maintain, preserve, and enhance the environmental, ecological, aesthetic, cultural and historical qualities of Big Timber.*

Objectives

- a) Protect areas of environmental significance such as wetlands and floodplains along the rivers bordering Big Timber.
- b) Improve the visual appearance, attractiveness to business, or quality of life in Big Timber.
- c) Maintain high quality groundwater, surface water, air and general environment qualities.
- d) Promote the responsible use, conservation and development of natural resources.
- e) Protect the recreational resources of the area, both for enjoyment by residents and to maintain the economic value they represent.
- f) Preserve the historical and cultural amenities within Big Timber.

Implementation Strategy for the Environment and Natural Resources Goals & Objectives:

Policies/Actions In Place or On-Going:

General Environment:

- a) Base recommendations and decisions concerning environmental issues on available data and investigations.
- b) Establish and maintain good communications and coordination between Big Timber, Sweet Grass County, Forest Service, State of Montana, and other agencies concerning resource use and management.
- c) Actively enforce City ordinances pertaining to activities that are detrimental to the environment.
- d) Maintain recycling programs in Big Timber.
- e) Continue to promote and advertise recycling capabilities available for use by Big Timber and County residents.

Noxious Weed Control:

- f) Contain the existing infestation of weeds with the goal of control and strive to prevent the infestation of new weeds.
- g) Coordinate weed control and education efforts with railroad operators other governmental agencies.
- h) Require subdividers to include a weed management plan and a method to assess fees to cover implementation of the plan.

Recommended New Actions:

- a) Coordinate with the Service Learning Group at Sweet Grass High School to establish clean-up programs around the City.

4.2.4 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Goal

- ❖ *To maintain stable employment areas and pursue diverse employment opportunities in order to achieve full employment within the available labor force.*
- ❖ *To maintain Big Timber as a viable business community.*
- ❖ *To encourage a diversified year-round economy within the entire County .*
- ❖ *To broaden the tax base of the City.*

Objectives

- a) Encourage and support economic development that would create more jobs.
- b) Enhance community commerce, and improve the quality of life that residents now enjoy.
- c) Strengthen and broaden the economy of Big Timber in order to reduce the adverse effects of a downturn in a specific economic sector.
- d) Retain the present Big Timber Central Business District as the focal point of business and shopping activity.
- e) Motivate local residents and businesses to take action for community betterment and to improve the economic climate in the area.

Implementation Strategy for Economic Development Goals & Objectives:

Policies/Actions In Place or On-Going:

- a) Work jointly with the County toward expanding and sustaining a diverse economic environment for all of Sweet Grass County.
- b) Promote additional utilization of the existing Industrial Park.
- c) Revitalize local agricultural and business development.
- d) Promote local business development and expansion through continued alliance with local and regional economic development organizations such as:
 - Beartooth Resource, Conservation and Development District
 - Sweet Grass Chamber of Commerce
 - Local realtors
 - Montana Department of Commerce programs
 - Sweet Grass Conservation District
 - MSU Extension Service
- e) Pursue utilization of a portion of the County's Metal Mines License tax revenue for supporting planning and economic development.
- f) Support the continuation of focus groups created by the Horizons Program.

Recommended New Actions:

- a) Develop an economic development plan for commercial services, tourism and industrial growth in the City of Big Timber.
- b) Develop a community directory utilizing a website or other media that provides current information on local services and businesses and cottage industries in Big Timber.
- c) Investigate obtaining a historical designation on the City's Central Business District.

4.2.5 PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES

Goal

- ❖ *To provide the following services in an efficient, well coordinated and economical manner:*
 - o *Emergency medical services*
 - o *Fire protection*
 - o *Law enforcement*
 - o *Medical care*
 - o *Education*
 - o *Social services*
 - o *Cultural services (library)*
 - o *Recreation opportunities*
 - o *General City and County administration*
- ❖ *Provide for City infrastructure which satisfies pedestrian and vehicle transportation, utility needs and solid waste disposal needs of residents, businesses, industries, schools and visitors in an effective and efficient manner.*
- ❖ *To provide adequate parks and recreation facilities to serve citizens of all ages.*

Objectives

- a) Obtain maximum usage of existing community and public facilities as multiple-use centers.
- b) Maintain properly equipped and trained organizations for police, fire, ambulance, and rescue services and be well prepared for emergency and disaster events.
- c) Provide street systems to efficiently serve transportation needs.
- d) Provide for Public Works networks such as water supply, sewage disposal and solid waste disposal in the most efficient manner and in accordance with regulatory standards.
- e) Have adequate railroad and motor freight activities which will provide for shipment of raw materials and finished products.
- f) Maintain high quality airport services and facilities.

- g) Support medical care services for residents through continued support of the following facilities:
 - PMC Hospital, Clinic and Nursing Home
 - Emergency Services
 - Assisted Living Center
 - County Health Nurse
- h) Provide for strategically-located, adequately designed, and attractive community facilities.
- i) Encourage safe pedestrian movement throughout the City.
- j) Promote a safe environment within the community.
- k) Support a high quality public school system.

Implementation Strategy for Public Infrastructure and Services Goals & Objectives:
Policies/Actions In Place or On-Going:

Law Enforcement, Fire Protection and Medical Services:

- a) Provide access to affordable quality health care service within Big Timber.
- b) Meet with County officials regularly to maintain cooperation and provide for best utilization of law enforcement and emergency services.
- c) Coordinate emergency and disaster training with other organizations and agencies, and the County.

Cultural/Recreation:

- d) Provide community park and recreation facilities.
- e) Provide library programs and facility.

Transportation:

- f) Repair and routinely maintain Big Timber streets on a planned and prioritized schedule to achieve the most efficient results.
- g) Work with the Montana Department of Transportation officials to resolve maintenance issues or hazards as they may arise along the state highway routes through Big Timber.
- h) Maintain a Capital Improvement Plan for City streets.
- i) Utilize Community Transportation Enhancement Program (CTEP) funds offered by the federal government to extend and replace City sidewalks.
- j) Pursue Safe Routes to School grants for sidewalk additions and replacements.

City of Big Timber Sewer, Water and Solid Waste Disposal Systems:

- k) Contract with professional engineering services as needed to provide reviews of infrastructure in new subdivisions and for the design and oversight of City infrastructure projects.

- l) Insure that solid waste disposal services and recycling programs are available for Big Timber.

General Administration of Services:

- m) Maintain all public facilities at acceptably safe levels and replace overcrowded and irreparable ones. Provide for continued maintenance of public facilities and plan for future improvements and replacement needs.
- n) Participate in the maintenance of the County Disaster Plan with updates as needed to keep the plan current with the characteristics and trends within Big Timber and the county.
- o) Maintain the Big Timber address database for the E-911 system.
- p) Periodically review fees charged by the City Office and the Planning Office for reviews and permitting related to new construction, subdivision, zone changes and variances and revise fees as necessary to reflect current review costs.
- q) Maintain a capital improvement program for roads, sewer and water, fire protection equipment, sidewalks and other public facilities and utilities.

Recommended New Actions:

Law Enforcement, Fire Protection and Medical Services:

- a) Investigate methods for recruitment and retention incentives of Emergency Medical Technicians.
- b) Participate in exploring the feasibility of jail replacement/expansion options such as constructing a new joint detention facility with adjoining counties or expanding/replacing the existing Sweet Grass County jail.

Cultural/Recreation:

- c) Explore the creation of a City-County Park District which could support recreational facilities within Big Timber and its surrounding area such as:
 - Bike paths in and around Big Timber
 - Swimming Pool
 - Tennis Courts
 - Multipurpose ball/sport fields
 - Park areas and greenways
- d) Develop a current parks and recreation plan, that addresses land acquisition and/or development program for City parks, and a program for efficient park maintenance.

Transportation:

- e) Develop a current street and transportation plan that identifies priorities and a program for street improvements and maintenance. The plan also should outline a program for financing needed storm drainage facilities. As a minimum the plan should consider: - upgrading McLeod Street; changing from angle to parallel parking on McLeod Street and providing off-street parking for the public; - providing storm drainage, and upgrading drainage crossings on Highway 10.
- f) Evaluate utilizing Special Improvement Districts to as a way to fund street and sidewalk improvements.

City of Big Timber Sewer, Water and Solid Waste Disposal Systems:

- g) Adopt an annexation and facilities extension plan to guide the City in extending municipal services to new development on lands adjacent to the City.
- h) Reevaluate current water and sewer connection and system development fees charged by the City and update the fees based on the findings.
- i) Charge for garbage by volume to provide incentive to residents to reduce garbage quantities.
- j) Consider organizing periodic chipping of wood waste such as tree limbs and utilize the mulch product for landscaping needs of the City and residents.
- k) Prepare and maintain a Source Water Protection Plan that will provide guidance on managing influences on the City's water supply taken from the Boulder River watershed.

General Administration of Services:

- l) Develop an organized reference library at City Hall containing all regulations, policies and procedure manuals and plan documents pertaining to the City's operations.
- m) Explore the feasibility of implementing a local option tax or other revenue to fund Big Timber infrastructure.
- n) Conduct joint reviews of Big Timber and County facility needs and utilization and evaluate whether there are opportunities for joint uses.

5 CITY ADMINISTRATION

5.1 REGULATIONS

As supplements to regulations mandated by state statutes, the City of Big Timber utilizes adopted regulations which are specific to the certain activities or proposals. The regulations are an important tool in providing for protection of public health and safety needs within the City and orderly management of infrastructure, services and resources. Regulatory documents utilized by the City include:

- Sweet Grass County and Big Timber Subdivision Regulations
- Sweet Grass County Floodplain Development Regulations
- The Big Timber Zoning Ordinance
- City of Big Timber Ordinances

In addition to regulations, the City has prepared several planning documents which are utilized for policy and regulation development. Planning documents currently adopted by the City include:

- Emergency Operations Plan
- Flood Hazard Mitigation Plan
- Weed Management Plan
- East Boulder Hard Rock Mining Impact Plan

In addition to the above documents the City is currently pursuing the preparation of a Source Water Protection Plan which will provide guidance in overseeing and managing influences on the City's water supply which is taken from the Boulder River watershed.

5.1.1 SUBDIVISION REGULATIONS

SUBDIVISION APPLICATION REVIEW

Subdivision development is a significant factor affecting growth patterns and development of lands. It is important that the subdivision regulations adopted by Big Timber and the County contain review and design requirements which incorporate the policies set in Big Timber's and the County's growth policies.

Subdivisions and subdivision developments are governed by Title 76, Chapter 3 and 4, Montana Code Annotated. These statutes require the appropriate local government officials, to review subdivisions for consistency with state law, any zoning (pursuant to Title 76, Chapter 2, MCA) and local subdivision regulations. This is a legal process that analyzes specific items, which are spelled out in statute and in local subdivision regulations. Subdivision applications must fulfill the statutory requirements and be consistent with local subdivision regulations. Those that vary from the requirements may be denied, or approved subject to specific conditions which may include mitigation of certain impacts.

PRIMARY REVIEW CRITERIA FOR SUBDIVISIONS, 76-3-608 (3), MCA6.3

State law requires that a growth policy include a statement explaining how the governing body will define the primary review criteria listed in the Subdivision and Platting Act [74-3-608(3)(a), MCA], and how subdivision impacts will be evaluated regarding the primary review criteria. The Subdivision and Platting Act requires evaluation of a subdivision's effects on the following primary review criteria: agriculture, agricultural water user facilities, local services, the natural environment, wildlife and wildlife habitat and public health and safety.

EFFECT ON AGRICULTURE

1. Definition

Agriculture 41-2-103, MCA Definitions: As used in this part, the following definitions apply: (1) "Agriculture" means : (a) all aspects of farming, including the cultivation and tillage of the soil; (b)(i) dairying; and (ii) the production, cultivation, growing, and harvesting of any agricultural or horticultural commodities, including commodities defined as agricultural commodities in the federal Agricultural Marketing Act (12 U.S.C. 1141j(g)); (c) the raising of livestock, bees, fur-bearing animals, or poultry; and (d) any practices, including forestry or lumbering operations, performed by a farmer or on a farm as an incident to or in conjunction with farming operations, including preparation for market or delivery to storage, to market, or to carriers for transportation to market.

81-8-701, MCA Definitions. "Agriculture and food product" includes a horticultural, viticultural, dairy, livestock, poultry, bee, other farm or garden product, fish or fishery product, and other foods.

2. Evaluation Criteria

- a. The number of acres that would be removed from the production of crops or livestock. Acreage will be obtained from Department of Revenue tax records.
- b. Removal of agricultural lands that are critical to the County's agricultural base. Maps and land capability classifications developed by the USDA Natural Resource Conservation shall be used to determine the agricultural significance of land.
- c. It will be determined whether the unsubdivided parcel is part of a continuing farm or ranch unit by evaluating the use of the remainder and adjoining properties.
- d. Potential conflicts between the proposed subdivision and adjacent agricultural operations shall be evaluated including:
 - Interference with the movement of livestock or farm machinery
 - Interference with agricultural production and activities
 - Maintenance of fences
 - Proliferation of weeds
 - Increased human activity
 - Harassment of livestock by pets

EFFECT ON AGRICULTURAL WATER USER FACILITIES

1. Definition

Agricultural water user facility shall mean any part of an irrigation system used to produce an agricultural product on property used for agricultural purposes as defined in 15-7-202, MCA, including but not limited to ditches, canals, headgates, sprinkler systems, water pipelines,

tanks, reservoirs, ponds or developed spring used for agricultural purposes.

2. Evaluation Criteria

- a. Location and proximity to a ditch, canal, headgate, sprinkler system, watering tank or developed spring shall be considered.
- b. Consider potential subdivision nuisance complaints or problems due to agricultural water user facilities such as safety hazards to residents or water problems from irrigation ditches, headgates, siphons, sprinkler systems or other facilities.
- c. Ownership of water rights and the historic and current use of facility on the proposed subdivision shall be examined. Easements to protect the use of water user facilities on or accessed through a subdivision shall be considered.
- d. Allocation of water rights within a subdivision shall be considered.

EFFECT ON LOCAL SERVICES

1. Definition

Local services: Any and all services or facilities that local government entities are authorized to provide.

2. Evaluation Criteria

- a. Increased demand on services and need to expand services for a proposed subdivision.
 - Sheriff
 - Big Timber Volunteer Fire Department
 - Sweet Grass County Ambulance Service
 - Schools
 - Public Works
- b. Cost of services
 - Current and anticipated tax revenues
 - Cost of services for the subdivision
 - Evaluate the need for special improvement districts

EFFECT ON NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

1. Definition

Natural environment means the physical and biological features of an area that may be altered by human activity including topography, soil, geology, vegetation, and surface and groundwater.

2. Evaluation Criteria

- a. Expected alteration of streambanks. Any draining, filling or alteration of wetland.
- b. Needed cuts and fills on slopes as a result of road or building construction.
- c. Significant removal of vegetation contributing to potential soil erosion or bank or slope instability.
- d. Effect on the level of the aquifer.

EFFECT ON WILDLIFE AND WILDLIFE HABITAT

1. Definitions

Wildlife means animals that are neither human nor domesticated.

Wildlife habitat means the sum of environmental conditions in a specific place that is occupied by a wildlife species or population.

2. Evaluation Criteria

- a. Location of subdivision and access roads with respect to critical wildlife areas such as big game wintering range, calving areas, migration routes, nesting areas, wetlands, or habitat for endangered or threatened species.

EFFECT ON PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY

1. Definition

Public health and safety refers to natural or man-made conditions that may pose a physical threat to either future residents or the general public.

2. Evaluation Criteria

- a. Potential hazards to residents of subdivision from high voltage lines, high-pressure gas lines, highways, roads, railroads or railroad crossings, nearby industrial activity.
- b. Evaluate existing activities taking place in the vicinity of the subdivision.
- c. Evaluate traffic and fire conditions.
- d. Presence of natural hazards such as flooding, rock, snow or landslides, high winds, wildfire, or difficulties such as shallow bedrock, high water table, expansive soils or excessive slopes.

PUBLIC HEARING PROCEDURES FOR SUBDIVISIONS

State law requires that a growth policy include a statement explaining how public hearings regarding proposed subdivisions will be conducted.

1. Public Notice Procedures

- a. Public hearings shall be held for all subdivisions except first minor subdivisions on a tract of record which are exempt under State statute from the requirement of holding a public hearing.
- b. All subdivisions that come before the Planning Board for their recommendations in accordance with the Sweet Grass County – City of Big Timber Subdivision Regulations, will be legally noticed. Published legal notices shall include instructions for requesting alternate accessible hearing locations or formats required by persons with disabilities who wish to participate in the hearing.
- c. Adjoining landowners shall be notified of proposed subdivisions.
- d. Adjoining landowners mean owners of record of properties that share common boundaries or that are located directly across a road, river, stream, ditch, or lake and would otherwise be sharing a boundary in the absence of such feature.

2. Public Hearing Procedures

- a. Circulate a sign-up sheet. Provide a place for public to indicate whether they intend to speak.

- b. The hearing is opened by the Planning Board Chairperson who then describes the reason for the public hearing.
- c. The Chairperson explains the subdivision review procedure.
- d. Establish ground rules for speaking.
- e. Review the statutory review criteria to be utilized in the review process:
 - i. Effect on agriculture, agricultural water user facilities, local services, the natural environment, wildlife and wildlife habitat and the public health and safety.
 - ii. Compliance with the requirements of the MSPA and the regulations and review procedures of the local subdivision regulations.
 - iii. The provisions of easements or public dedications for the location and installation of any necessary utilities.
 - iv. The provision of legal and physical access to each parcel within the subdivision.
 - v. Whether the preliminary plat conforms to the provisions of:
 - ✓ The Montana Subdivision and Platting Act
 - ✓ The Sweet Grass County and City of Big Timber Subdivision Regulations
 - ✓ Applicable zoning regulations
 - ✓ Other regulations in effect in the area.
- f. Planning Office provides a staff report and presents finding of fact and recommendations
- g. The Subdivider or an authorized representative provides their presentation
- h. The Chairperson opens the floor for public input on the proposal
 - Information submitted should be factual, relevant and not merely duplication of previous presentation.
 - A reasonable time shall be allowed each speaker.
 - Each person speaking shall give name, address and nature of interest in the matter.
- i. A question and answer period for the board to inquire into statements made earlier is then provided.
- j. Rebuttal can be allowed at the discretion of the Chairperson.
- k. Close the Public Hearing and continue with the Planning Board Meeting as directed by the Board.

5.1.2 CITY OF BIG TIMBER ORDINANCES

The City of Big Timber has an adopted City Code consisting of ordinances and resolutions passed by the City Council. The Code includes regulations passed by the City Council pertaining to areas such as business and licensing, public health and safety, animal control, firearms, motor vehicles and traffic, public ways and property, fire regulations and development requirements. The City Code These ordinances are enforced by the Sheriff Department and City staff as needed. Copies of the Code may be viewed at City Hall.

5.1.3 BIG TIMBER ZONING ORDINANCE

The City of Big Timber governs the Big Timber Zoning District. The zoning regulations are administered by the City/County Planning Office. The City-County Planning Board reviews applications for changes to the zoning districts or proposals to revise the Zoning Ordinance and submits recommendations to the City Council which is responsible for approving or denying these revisions.

5.1.4 FLOODPLAIN DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS

The Sweet Grass County Floodplain Development Regulations were adopted in 1982 in order to comply with the Montana Floodplain and Floodway Management Act (Title 76, Chapter 5 of the MCA) and to ensure compliance with the requirements for continued participation by the County in the National Insurance Program. The Floodplain Development Regulations apply to land use within the mapped 100 year floodplains of streams within the County. The City-County Planning Director administers the County's floodplain regulations. Floodplain Development Permits are required from the Planning Office for all land use activities within a designated floodplain such as expansion or alteration of existing structures or facilities, streambank alteration, excavations or fills or utility or road crossings.

5.2 OTHER GUIDING DOCUMENTS

The City also maintains planning documents such as this Growth Policy and other management plans and standards, which are utilized for setting policy and specifications. The City Council is guided by and gives consideration to these documents in the:

- Authorization, construction, alteration, or abandonment of public ways, public places, public structures or public utilities
- Authorization, acceptance, or construction of facilities and utilities
- Adoption of zoning ordinances or resolutions
- Authorization of City regulations/ordinances

5.2.1 CITY OF BIG TIMBER GROWTH POLICY

The Big Timber Growth Policy has been prepared in accordance with Section 76-1-601 of the Montana Code. This document shall be updated every five years or sooner if significant changes occur affecting City conditions and an update is requested by the Big Timber City Council. The County also maintains a growth policy for all areas outside of the Big Timber City limits. The Big Timber City Council and the Sweet Grass County Board of Commissioners shall coordinate the preparation of growth policies with each other so that the policies do not conflict in content.

5.2.2 STREET AND UTILITY STANDARDS

The City of Big Timber has adopted street and utility standards which were prepared by the engineering firm Morrison Mairle in 1999. The standards describe requirements for the design and construction of City infrastructure.

5.2.3 EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN

This plan identifies and assigns disaster responsibilities for the City of Big Timber and Sweet Grass County personnel in preparation for, response to, recovery from and mitigation of natural or man-made disasters. The plan provides guidelines for the personnel who have responsibilities to provide services to disaster victims.

5.2.4 FLOOD HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN

The Sweet Grass County Flood Hazard Mitigation Plan identifies flood hazards within the County and provides mitigation measures that may reduce the potential for flood damage to private and publicly owned property. The County is required to maintain a Flood Hazard Mitigation Plan in order to be eligible for grant assistance from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for projects that may reduce flood damage potential to a property that has suffered repeated losses due to flooding.

5.2.5 WEED MANAGEMENT PLAN

The “Noxious Weed Management Act” which became effective in 1985 required County weed boards to create a noxious weed program for their County. The Sweet Grass County Weed Plan was adopted in order to comply with this law. The City of Big Timber must also maintain a Weed Plan for City properties. The plan offers guidelines for implementation of a weed management program. This program is intended to prevent or reduce the economic and other losses to County residents from noxious weed invasion.

5.2.6 SMC EAST BOULDER HARD ROCK MINING IMPACT PLAN

The Montana Hard Rock Mining Impact Act requires large scale mineral developments to prepare an impact plan that describes the financial impact the mineral development will have on a local government agency. Stillwater Mining Company prepared this plan which was approved by Sweet Grass County and Big Timber and then adopted by the Hard Rock Mining Impact Board which oversees the implementation of the plan. The original plan was adopted in 1995 with an amendment adopted in 1998. As required by the Hard Rock Mining Impact Act, the plan provides estimates of persons coming into the impacted area as a result of the mine development and projects increased capital and operating costs to local government units for providing services that can be expected as a result of the development. There is a significant lag time between the time when additional facilities and services must be provided and the time when additional tax revenue is available as a result of the increased tax base. The plan describes financial assistance that the developer will give to local government units.